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THE
EXAMPLE OF FRANCE
A
WARNING TO BRITAIN.

It is a certain, though a strange truth, that in politics all principles that are speculatively right, are practically wrong; the reason of which is, that they proceed on a supposition, that men act rationally; which being by no means true, all that is built on so false a foundation, on experiment, falls to the ground.

SOAME JENYNS.

THE SECOND EDITION.

BY
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BURY ST. EDMUND'S:
PRINTED BY J. RACKHAM, STATIONER.
FOR W. RICHARDSON, N^o 91. ROYAL-EXCHANGE, LONDON:

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THE
EXAMPLE OF FRANCE
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THE writers who have published their sentiments on the events which have passed in France since the Revolution, have been so lavish of argument, so exuberant in theory, that they seem to have relied for success with their readers, not so much on force of facts, as on ingenuity in weaving curious webs of reasoning. We have had, on the one hand, panegyrics on Gallic freedom, with enthusiastic calls to pursue the same system in order to arrive at the same happiness: on the other hand, every circumstance of the Revolution, from the original wish for liberty, has been condemned and satirized with more wit than truth. To plain men these writers seem equally removed from that

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examination, which, attending solely to facts, and their immediate and more remote consequences, is not apt to trust to the cunning of argument, but looks on every side for the more solid support of experiment.

I am inclined to think the application of theory to matters of government, a surprising imbecility in the human mind; for men to be ready to trust to reason in inquiries, where experiment is equally at hand for their guide, has been pronounced, by various great authorities, to be, in every other science, the grossest folly—why the observation should not equally extend to the science of legislation, will not easily appear.

My personal pursuit, for a long series of years, has confirmed me in the habit of experimental inquiry: I have observed on so many occasions the fallacy of reasoning, even when exerted with great force of talents, that I am apt, whenever facts are not clearly discerned, to question rather than to decide; to doubt much more readily than to pronounce; and to value the citation of one new experimented case in point, more than an hundred brilliant declamations. Having resided a good deal in France during the progress of the Revolution, to which I was, for some time, a warm friend; having passed through every province of the kingdom; examined

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mined all her principal manufactures ; gained much instruction, relative to the state of her commerce, and attended minutely to the situation of her people, it was natural for me, on my return to England, to consult with attention the legislative acts of the new government ; and to procure, by correspondence and conversation, with persons on whom I could depend, such intelligence as was necessary to enable me to satisfy my curiosity concerning the result of the most singular Revolution recorded in the annals of mankind. I should consider myself as a bad subject of Britain, if I did not use every endeavour to render the knowledge, thus acquired, of use to my countrymen ; and it is solely with this view that I now throw together a few short essays, inserted originally in the Annals of Agriculture, somewhat improved in form, and with such additions as the events of the period afford.

But in attempting to give expressions inadequate to the indignation every one must feel at the horrible events now passing in France, I am sensible that I may be reproached with changing my politics, my " principles," as it has been expressed.—My principles I certainly have not changed, because if there is one principle more predominant than another in my politics, it is the *principle of change*. I have been too long a farmer to be governed by any thing but events ; I have a consti-

tutional abhorrence of theory, of all trust in abstract reasoning; and consequently I have a reliance merely on experience, in other words, on events, the only principle worthy of an experimenter.

The circumstance, of there being men who having been friends to the Revolution, before the 10th of August, yet continue friends to it, proves clearly one of two things; that they are either republicans, and therefore approved of the Revolution before the 10th of August merely as a step to the 21st of January, thinking, with Dr. Priestley, the Revolution of the 10th *necessary and* HAPPY;—or, that they have changed their principles. The Revolution before the 10th of August, was as different from the Revolution after that day as light from darkness; as clearly distinct in principle and practice as liberty and slavery; for the same man to approve therefore of both, he must either be uncandid or changeable; uncandid in his approbation before that period—changeable in his approbation after it. How little reason therefore for reproaching me with sentiments contrary to those I published before the 10th of August! I am not changeable, but steady and consistent; the same principles which directed me to approve the Revolution, in its commencement (the principles of real liberty), led me to detest it after the 10th of August. The reproach of changeableness, or *something worse*, belongs entirely to those

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those who did *not* then change their opinion, but approve the *republic*, as they had approved the *limited monarchy*. Upon the sure ground of experiment, it shall be my business, in the ensuing pages, to bring to the reader's notice some facts, proper to explain,

FIRST, the real state of France : and,

SECONDLY, the causes of her evils ; and I shall then apply her example to the landed, monied, commercial, and labouring interests of these kingdoms.

PRESENT STATE of FRANCE.

THE facts which will best explain this, concern—1. Government. 2. Personal Liberty. 3. Security of Property.

Government.

In all discussions relative to the new system of constitution or government in France, it is necessary, first, to inquire, whether they have any other system than that of anarchy. The circumstances, to which I shall allude, tend very strongly to prove that the Jacobin clubs, the general councils of the commons, and the nominal legislative convention, appear so to divide the supreme power among

them, while the mob, or *nation*, call it which you please, act so independently of all three, that, to compliment the result with the term *government*, would be truly ridiculous. To talk of the Rights of Man, or any other declarations or laws of the Constituent Assembly, is perfectly beside all present questions; the heptarchy is not more out of date.—But let us examine facts, as reported by Jacobin authority.

The freedom of elections seems to be curiously attended to.—Resolution of the Jacobin club of September 13, sent to all the clubs of the kingdom: —“Let us not lose a single moment to prevent, by firm measures, the danger of seeing these new legislators oppose, with impunity, the sovereign will of the nation. Let us be inspired with the spirit of the electoral body of Paris whose decrees express, *that a scrutiny shall be made of the National Convention, for the purpose of expelling from its bosom such suspected members as may, in their nomination, have escaped the sagacity of the primary assemblies.*” (*Polit. State*, No. 6. p. 449.) What a beautiful lesson is this to the men who complain of our representation in England, and wish it reformed.—Here is a delicious reform, and at the hands of republicans! The world, probably, never contained a proof of more determined confusion;

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confusion; this is truly a *digest of anarchy*. For members to be elected to the Convention under the controul of the commons of Paris, whether they shall take their seat or not, is curious, and ought to give us the clearest conviction, that the Jacobins want no Duke of Brunswick to be the avenger of the crimes of Paris. None can be such adepts in national misery, such founders of national ruin, as the people themselves, whose exertions are, with singular ingenuity, producing a system, in which regulation shall produce disorder, and decrees blood. That the people design to legislate personally for themselves, cannot be doubted; they mean the Convention to have no power, but an initiative *to propose* to the sovereign body, who will accept or reject by the organ of clubs.

It is easy to guess at the obedience paid to a sovereign body whose election is thus respected: the Convention decreed, that all elections should be made by ballot: this was directly disobeyed by Paris. "Of twenty-five Sections," says Barbaroux, Oct. 30, "that have returned an account of the election of a mayor, eighteen have violated that law; and the section of the Pantheon has proposed, should their president be called to the bar, to attend him armed."

October 5th, a deputation from that city, thus speak at the bar, demanding the speedy trial of the King. "The men of the 10th of August will never suffer, that those they have invested with their confidence shall despise for an instant the sovereignty of the people; courage is the virtue of a free people; and we will not depart from the principle, that if it is just to obey laws, it is just also to resist despots, under whatever masque they may conceal themselves: we think it for our interest to make our elections *viva voce* (*a haute voix*)."

The minister of the interior is forced to write the same day to the Convention, "I pray you to take measures, to prevent being null and without effect all the demands and requisitions which I daily make, IN THE NAME OF THE LAW, to the commons of Paris." The minister, in the name of the Convention, applied for law; but found the commons of Paris stronger than both. "I have seen," says Cambon, Sept. 25th, "these commons rob the national edifices of all their most precious effects, without the least register or note; and when we decreed that these effects should be carried to the national treasure, that decree remained without execution."

"The council general of the commons of Paris," says Barrere, Nov. 10th, "has sought to depress, by every possible method, the national representation," The legislative body said, that *that germ*
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of new revolutions ought to disappear, and the next day it was obliged to withdraw its decree. It said also, *that the gates of Paris ought to be opened, that every man might travel freely through the interior of the empire*; but the council general ordered them to be shut. The legislature decreed *that no more passports should be necessary*. The council general directly ordered that none should stir without a passport *."

That the municipalities are in a state of real anarchy appears clearly from different bodies assuming the same power; while the municipalities of Paris were demanding one sum of the Convention, *le commune proprement dite*, or ninety-six commissioners of sections were demanding another, which induced Kersaint to explain. *In what anarchy is our administration plunged. Ought there to be two bodies of representatives of the commons of Paris? the law prohibits it**. This is curious; a legal vestry meets in the church, and is opposed by another in an alehouse kitchen, who term themselves the vestry, properly called; and one having a taste of public plunder, the other petition also for the same thing; such are the bodies that seize and divide, under the epithets of confiscation, administration, and sale, the estates and property of emigrants.

* Moniteur, Oct. 28,

† Ibid.

The commissioners of the sections of Paris, at the bar of the Convention, bully it in these terms: "The time presses—the storm forms itself."—Thus overturning the government that had been formed on the Rights of Man, which, instead of yielding peace and tranquility, produced storms only, the eternal product of such Revolutions; and the blood that had been so lavishly spilled for the *public repose*, afforded so little, that the minister Rolland, writing to the commons of Paris, says, *I hear of nothing but conspiracies, and projects of murder, and assassination* *. *The wicked preached yesterday, at the same moment, in different parts of Paris, pillage and assassination* †. And being ordered by the Convention to report the state of Paris, his expression is, *the administrative bodies, without powers; the commons despotic; the people deceived;—such is Paris!* ‡ But deceived and ignorant as they were, they thought their lights sufficient to instruct the nominal legislature; as Marat and his gang were daily declaring, that cutting off heads was the *genuine employment of a people*, and denouncing so many members of the Convention in the Jacobin clubs, it was debated in the Convention, whether a guard ought not to be drawn from all the eighty-three departments. On this project, the commissioners of the forty-eight sections of Paris thus speak (Oct 19) to the Con-

Moniteur, Nov. 3.

† Nov. 1.

‡ Oct. 30.

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vention: "Proxies of the sovereign! You see before you the deputies of the sections of Paris. They come to make you understand eternal truths. No words—but things! It is proposed to place you on a level with tyrants—to surround you with a distinct guard. The sections of Paris weighing the principles on which the sovereignty of the people resides, declare to you that this project is odious and dangerous. We will attack in front such a principle. What audaciousness, to conjecture that the people will consent to such a decree! What! they propose to you constitutional decrees, before the existence of the constitution! Wait till the law exists; and the people have sanctioned it. Paris has made the Revolution. Paris has given liberty to the rest of France. *Paris knows how to maintain it* *."

Here Paris expressly declares to the Convention, that their decrees were waste paper, till the people sanction them: such is personal representation; an assembly is so elected, and the people no sooner possess such representatives, than, intoxicated with power, they declare their deputies things of straw, and their decrees null, till sanctioned by the people themselves! What a lesson! to the friends of reform! *In all the public places, says Louvet †, at the Thuilleries, in the Palais de la Revolution, and*

* Monit. Oct. 211

† Oct. 29.

elsewhere, you hear them preach continually insurrection against the National Convention. The deputies of the department of Loire, tell the Convention at the bar, *Your scandalous debates are known in every corner of France. The afflicted people sent you to make laws, and you know not how to make a regulation; they sent you to render France respected, and you know not how to respect it yourselves; they sent you to establish liberty, and you have not known how to maintain your own. You tremble before these tribunes* *.

The National Convention, says Marat himself, offers the most afflicting and scandalous spectacle. Could an American savage be brought into it, he would believe the French legislators an assembly of madmen and furies. Unworthy men! You are without knowledge, virtue, patriotism, or shame; and are led by a band of vile wicked rascals, devoted to ambition, and trembling lest their crimes should be revealed. †

Paine is of an opinion directly contrary, "they sprang not from the filth of rotten boroughs—they debate in the language of gentlemen—their dignity is serene—they preserve the right angled character of man." We well know what their language is; and if a right angled character produces

* Monit. Jan. 10, 1793.

† Journal de Marat, Jan. 16.

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right angled actions, we know what those are also. For the serenity of their dignity!!!—It is a fit subject for mirth but not for argument.

It is high time for us to know, says Cambon, that the Convention is absolutely despised. Anarchy, said Baurere †, is at its zenith: and Barbaroux ‡, Anarchy reigns around us, and we have done nothing to repress it. Those who provoke to murder are yet triumphant. Anarchy is the cause of all our evils!* says the PRESIDENT OF THE CONVENTION to the deputation for the department of Indre and Loire ||.

These are the accounts and the words of the members of the Convention openly delivered; but we have a reformer in England, who characterizes the French government with the epithets of,—“the erect mien and heavenly dignity of aspect,—the fair and enchanting form,—the vision so delightful.”—It is whimsical enough, that while the French find their government a mere anarchy of murderers and banditti, our English reformers should delineate it as the peculiar dispensation of Providence showering blessings on mankind. That while the administrators of the department of Calvados, tell the Convention, that Paris is the focus

* Monit. Dec. 29. † Oâ. 30. ‡ Oâ. 30. || Dec. 4.

*of insurrection, vengeance, and proscription: that innocent blood has flowed, that villains who are the detestation of the nation, and will be the opprobrium of posterity, still calculate, in criminal silence, the life and death of citizens **, an Englishman can be found to declare such a government so beneficent, that he can refer it only to the first great cause of all! †

Jan. 16, The minister of the interior to the committee of general safety; *every day for a month past, they have talked of renewing the proscriptions; I have, for many days, received and laid before you assurances of projects of massacre and murder, publickly preached.*

From such a polluted fountain, it is easy to suppose what streams must flow; and that all parts of France have been scenes either of insurrection, of plunder, or of blood; the instances of Marseilles, Lyons, Avignon, Arles, Rouen, Caen, Bourdeaux, Nancy, Lille, and a long list of other cities, are notorious: it may not be so generally known, that at Charleville the colonel commandant was murdered ‡. That at Cressy all was riot and violence §. That at Cambrai the lieutenant colonel Besombre was murdered by the Gens d'armes,

* Monit. Oct. 20.
Newcastle.

† Major Cartwright to the Duke of
‡ Sept. 4.

§ Oct. 17.

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and captain Logros' head was on a bayonette*. That the rebellion in Poitou was of 10,000 †, and that of Chartres double. More singular than these is the case of D'Hoté, who being condemned to the stocks only for four hours, by the *jury de jugement*, for crimes that merited an hundred deaths, being exposed on the Place de Greve, demanded of the populace, *liberty or death*; the mob, in spite of the Gens d'armes, mounted the scaffold, cut the cords of the criminal, and carried him off in triumph. When, says the editor of the *Moniteur*, reporting it, *will the people feel the necessity of respecting the laws?* ‡

Marat will not be suspected of a want of that staunch republicanism and Jacobin ardour, which is inclined to admit no more evils in the new government, than are really to be found in it. What is his account? *Consider the actual state of France; the profound misery in which the people languish; the enormous dilapidations of the public fortune; the rapid exhaustion of its last resources; consider the monopolies, thefts, brigandages, massacres, rapine, and disorder of every species, which desolate the kingdom. Never was the misery of the people so ruinous; never was anarchy carried to such excess; never was tyranny so devouring; never was there such a contempt of law!!!*

* Oct. 10.

† *Moniteur*, Oct. 15.

‡ Oct. 29.

|| *Journal de Marat*, Mars 1.

What

What multiplied proofs of that fact, that without a King, and some *body* between the King and the people, where there is an indigent poor, all falls to confusion. The Jacobin Rabbeau once knew this :—" Dans un grand empire il faut absolument des hommes dé corés, sans quoi l'état tombera dans une vaste popularité, dans une immense démocratie, qui doit finir par l'anarchie, ou par le despotisme selon que le prince ou le peuple seront l'un ou l'autre, le plus fort." *

The Nation, says Paine, *not Parliament, should reform abuses: the idea of vitiated bodies reforming themselves is a paradox.* Exactly in proportion then to a nation interfering and taking the remedy of abuses into its own hands should be the effect in wiping them out. Apply to France for a commentary on this text. Has it been so? As *she* advanced in *reform*, did abuses disappear? Never was doctrine so belied by events as the doctrine of this great politician.

Such is the result of that constitution, founded on personal representation, which has been boasted as the pride and glory of legislation. Such are the effects that form the comment on so many hundred books and pamphlets published in praise

* *Considerations sur les Intérêts du Tiers Etat.* Par Rabbeau St. Etienne, 1788. 2d edit, P. 641.

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of an edifice erected on the Rights of Man!—
 And of which we may say, with truth and moderation, that it has brought more misery, poverty, devastation, imprisonment, bloodshed, and ruin on France, in four years, than the old government did in a century. Such is the government that has been contrasted by Paine to the *no* constitution of England. Every thing with us, according to him, has a constitution except the nation; and if we had a constitution we should be able to produce it. The French, on the contrary, formed one which they could produce, printed on vellum, and bound in morocco; carried by every one in his pocket, as the charter of his Rights; but, unfortunately for theories of government, this great effort of legislation; this boast of French, and envy of English Jacobins; this master-piece of the metaphysical ART of Abbé Sieyès; this quintessence of what *ought to be*, in opposition to *what is**; this fine machine; pronounced by so many pens immortal; ~~predictable to~~ the idea of Paine, *antecedent to the government, and distinct from it*; this capital production of Gallic genius, endured scarcely two years. The freedom it afforded was not sufficient for adepts in the Rights of Man: the existence of a King became offensive to the new lights by which they were illuminated. In-

* La physique ne peut être que la connoissance de *ce qui est*.
 L'art plus hardi demande *ce qui doit être* pour l'utilité des hommes.

urrection was pronounced a sacred duty ;—revolt followed ;—and the horrors that will for ever stain the annals of mankind,—the *deep damnation* that ensued,—are written in every heart from which Jacobinism has not eradicated all traces of feeling and humanity. Such has been the PRACTICE of the French Revolution ; for its THEORY, go to *Rights of Man*.

Perhaps experience will justify us in asserting, that that government is best which is best calculated to stand still ; because the thing wanted in government is not activity, but repose ; and to do nothing is nineteen times in twenty better than readily to do any thing. The vetos of different orders, or houses, therefore must be good, as they are so many impediments to action. No government is so restlessly active as a pure democracy, voting in a single assembly ; the mob being satisfied no longer than a torrent of events keeps them in breathless expectation. We see, in the case of France, that such bustle is the energy of mischief, the motion of despotism. Their late successes, so unlooked for and surprising, made them speak commonly, in the streets of Paris, of conquering Europe ; should farther success attend their arms, they will infallibly attempt it. The leaders, who owe their importance to the present hurricane of events, would sink too low in a calm, for such men to allow the storm to subside.

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the authority of future assemblies, says Paine, will legislate according to the principles prescribed in constitution; and if experience should shew, that alterations are necessary, they will not be left to the discretionary power of the government. Before his work was well circulated, that future government had ed down the constitution. He goes on—*A government arising out of society, cannot have the power of altering itself; if it had, it would be arbitrary.* Here he levels point blank the system he has in the five hundred pages to support. Then the whole government is arbitrary.

Let these infamies of abstract and ideal perfection are not black enough to deter men from boldly, in the full face of government and of day, giving their names to such sentiments as these, in which the British constitution and its friends are characterised:—"The mad councils of passion and desperation."—"Maimed, mutilated, mangled, and wretched condition."—"Scanty resources, loathsome offals, are all of freedom to the people of England taste."—"Mendicants living on crumbs."—"Visions of slaughtered millions and a pillaged nation."—"Happy Frenchmen! How long will Englishmen endure the shame of seeing their house of representatives a shocking contrast to models so pure!"—Not even a single concession will now, in my humble opinion,

put the people off their guard, and *compromise* be received as insult. Their demand is their right. They are taking their cause into their own hands. They want no patrons; and their friends will be their servants. Their operations are infallible; their strength will soon be invincible."—"America, the discoveries of these pregnant times, it has found out, that men may live and thrive without lords; that the sun will shine and the dew will descend where there are none but equal citizens partake of these blessings; and that even good laws can be made, and justice well administered without either hereditary legislators or hereditary judges*!"—The people of England, *subdued by wretched artifice and juggling policy;—their violated rights and expiring liberty*—says Mr. Sheridan *Victims of venal and perfidious associations*—Mr. Grey †.

Would any person conceive it possible, that the passages here collected, expressive of the war of detestation, were not applied to France, as being most peculiarly adapted to mark the state of the kingdom, weltering in its best blood, rather than to one in so singular a state of prosperity as

* Major Cartwright's Letter to the Duke of Newcastle.

† Declaration of the friends of the liberty of the press, p.

‡ Ibid. p. 15.

ed? When our destruction is threatened so
mpromise only—when so clear an explanation is given of
 s their right REAL meaning and intentions of the reforming
 ir own handicrafts—and when the operations and strength of
 iends will be rabble are so soon to be INVINCIBLE, it
 are infallibly behoves the government of this country to
 ”—“Am taken to danger so imminent; to menaces so au-
 es, it has become; and to a licentiousness of publication,
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 e dew will be gained, let loose the dæmons of discord, the hell
 al citizensounds of the mob, to the utter destruction of all
 at even great flourishes at present in this kingdom.

administered or hereditary. But Paine thinks differently of our *no* consti-
 nd, *subduer* tion.—“The country governs itself at its own
 —*their violence* xpence, by means of magistrates, juries, sessions,
 Mr. Sheridan and assize;—what is called government, is only
Associations—boundless extravagance.” This is one of the false
 and flippant remarks of that endless prevaricator,
 who has not fact to support him in more than one
 tible, than of a thousand assertions. What are magistrates with-
 of the war without the controul of sessions, but tyrants? What
 ance, as would sessions be without the King’s Bench?
 e state of What would the King’s Bench be without a supe-
 d, rather prior? You can finish in none of these steps with-
 erity as without tyranny being the consequence. It is the gra-
 dation and controul of powers which forms the true
 Newcastle. balance. It is THE CROWN that keeps all
 the press, and these meaner stars in their respective orbits; there

is no similar power in France, and *therefore* all confusion and tyranny. The admirable utility magistrates, sessions, assize, &c. are felt and admitted:—you would have this without a supreme magistrate,—that is, you would have attraction without matter, and solar heat without a sun.

“The generality of governments,” says Dr Priestley, “have hitherto been little more than a combination of *the few* against *the many*; and the mean passions and low cunning of these few have the greatest interests of mankind been too long sacrificed. Whole nations have been deluged with blood, and every source of future prosperity has been drained, to gratify the caprices of some of the most despicable, or the most execrable of the human species. For what else have been the generality of kings, their ministers of state, or their mistresses, to whose wills whole kingdoms have been subject? What can we say of those who have hitherto taken the lead in conducting the affairs of nations, but that they have commonly been either *weak* or *wicked*, and sometimes both. Hence the common reproach of all histories, that they exhibit little more than a view of the vices and miseries of mankind. From this time, therefore, we may expect that it will wear a different and more pleasing aspect*.”

* Letters to the Right Hon. Edmund Burke, p. 144.

The events which have passed since this passage was written, must make one smile in reading it. It now appears that the combination of the *many* against the *few*, can also deluge a nation in blood, with a cruelty more accursed, because unnecessary to the many: that sources of prosperity can be drained without ministers and without mistresses; that weakness and wickedness can take the lead without kings; and that history will still continue to exhibit the vices and miseries of mankind.

Personal Security.

THE state of France respecting the personal liberty of her citizens is dispatched in few words: THERE IS NO SUCH THING: the fact is so notorious, that an appeal to instances might by many be deemed unnecessary; there are, however, a few circumstances that merit noting, not so much to prove the violation of this first and most sacred duty of government, as to shew that such violations have been committed on *principle*; and perpetrated or permitted even by the legislature itself.

The declaration of the Rights of Man and of Citizens says, *no man can be accused, arrested, or detained, except in cases determined by the law, and* ACCORDING TO THE FORMS WHICH

THE LAW HAS PRESCRIBED. Such is the letter: what is the practice? On complaints from Niort, against some counter-revolutionists, seized by a mob thirsting for their blood, but who wished to have the flimsy cloak of a semblance of justice, the NATIONAL ASSEMBLY decreed, "that all the criminal tribunals of the kingdom should try, without appeal, all crimes committed against the Revolution*." And in order to indulge the same thirst at Paris, which was not, with all its murders, satiated, they decreed the removal of the criminals from Orleans to Paris; that is, from the legally established judicature, where there was a chance of justice, to an illegal one, where there was no such chance; and they did this in consequence of such addresses as these from the deputation of the commons of Paris. *It is time that the criminals at Orleans, be transferred to Paris, there to receive the punishment of their crimes. If you do not agree to this demand, we cannot answer for the vengeance of the people. You have heard us, and you know that insurrection is a sacred duty!* Invited to the honours of the meeting!!! The fate of these prisoners is known to every one.

The declaration says, that *no man can be punished but in virtue of a law established, and promulgated prior to the offence, and legally applied.* The ap-

* Monit. 31st.

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plication, "disobedience" in the colonies, "shall be regarded as high treason, and those who shall render themselves guilty shall be sent to France to be tried, according to the rigour of the law." The liberty of the press was provided for in the declaration. Such the theory. The practice was silencing all that were not *Jacobin* papers, and beheading the authors. No wonder that, under such a species of government, prisons should be emptied by massacre, and filled again by arbitrary arrests. Sept. 16, the minister writes thus to the Assembly: "The natural, civil, and political liberty of the nation is in question; since the 5th, above five hundred persons have been arrested, so that the prisons are as full as ever*; no satisfactory account is given of the authority; they have been imprisoned by orders given by the municipality, by sections, by the people, and even by individuals: *emprisonnés par ordre, soit de la municipalité, soit des sections, soit du peuple, SOIT MEME D'INDIVIDUS*; and the reasons of very few of these orders are given."

The legislature thus informed of the abuse, may be presumed to be on the wing to remedy it. The progress of the business is curious:—Oct. 8. De-

* Contrast this with the SEVEN prisoners (four of them not *state* ones), the whole number found in the Bastille when forced by the mob!!!

crec—"The National Convention decrees, that citizens detained in houses, which are neither prisons nor houses of arrest, shall be removed, within fifteen days, into legal prisons; after which time, every citizen, against whom there appears neither warrant of arrest, nor decree of accusation, shall be set at liberty *." If any doubts could remain of the real tyranny under which France groans, such a decree would be sufficient to remove them:—the fact of citizens being thus illegally confined, without warrant, and not in legal prisons, is here admitted; and men SO treated may be kept fifteen days longer before they are set free! Sept. 16, the Convention receive the notice officially, and Oct. 8, they decree a power of arbitrary imprisonment fifteen days longer!!—Nor does it end here; for Nov. 11, complaint is heard in the Assembly, that *no report is made concerning the prisoners* †; and it merits great attention, that during this long period of the imprisonment of so many unhappy people, Paris was incessantly convulsed; and every day brought reason to expect, that imprisonment and slaughter would prove synonymous terms. To imprison whom they pleased on suspicion, as a method of taking off those they dared not, or could not publicly accuse, was a convenient mode of tyranny, not unworthy of the wretch, a member of their Pandemonium, who,

* Monit. Oct. 9.

† Nov. 13.

speaking

speaking to the question of trying the unhappy King, assigned him to torments in the hearing of those tribunes, who might soon be the executioners of his bloody wishes. *Morisson*, "the first and most natural of all my affections would be, to see that sanguinary monster (Louis XVI.) expiate his guilt by the most cruel torments * : and another (*Gonchon*, Dec. 12.) says, *Kings will pass away ! but the declaration of rights and pikes will never pass away. Here let the tyrant bear his condemnation.* Deputation of the Section of *Gardes Françaises*, "The Section of *Luxemburg* has sworn to *poinard Louis XVI. if you do not condemn him to perish on a scaffold ; we were invited to accede to it †.*" As if the declaration of rights was not laid in the dust, when such language could be spoken of a prisoner unheard ; and amidst *unanimous and reiterated applauses !* The applauses of those whose pikes were ready.

In the full face of such authentic facts, given on the authority of their own ministers and friends, we read, in the *Political State of Europe*, printed by Jordan, and written by Paine and Co. No. 6. p. 435, that in Paris a respect is paid to the sacred preservation of property, and that the laws are *no where so universally respected and obeyed !!!* What will not Jacobin impudence reach !

* *Monit.* Nov. 14.

† Dec. 29.

The infamous Marat, deeper in the blood of the 2d of September than any other person, except, perhaps Petion, seeks to prove it the act, not of a few, but of the people. *As to the massacres of the 2d and 3d of September, it is an atrocity to represent them as the work of a gang of brigands. If so, the Assembly, the Minister of the Interior, and the Mayor of Paris, were the culpables; and nothing in the world can wash them clean from the crime of not having prevented assassinations that lasted three days; but they will doubtless say, it was impossible, being equally the act of the national guards, the federates, and the people. Petion rested tranquilly at table, with Brissot and his friends, and disdained to quit the party even for receiving the commissioners sent by the Assembly, to charge him to stop those excesses*.*

Such has been the attention to personal liberty, under the reign of philosophers, established on the ruins of the mildest and most benignant government in Europe, our own only excepted; a government cruelly libelled in the character given by one of our reforming orators, who thus describes it; "a species of government that trampled on the property, the liberty, and the lives of its subjects; that dealt in extortions, dungeons, and tortures: and that prepared, beforehand, a day of

* *Journal de Marat*, No. 105.

fanguinary vengeance*." Expressions so singularly applicable to the fabric erected by the Revolution, that one can with difficulty believe it possible that they were meant for any other.

Security of Property.

IF I had not heard Jacobin conversation in England, there would have been little occasion for this paragraph; to a reader that reflects, it must at once be apparent that where there is no personal freedom, there can be no secure property: It would be an insult to common sense to suppose, that a tyrannical mob would respect the property of those whose throats they cut: arbitrary imprisonment and massacre must be inevitably followed by direct attacks on property. Contrary however to these plain deductions of common sense, it has been repeatedly asserted, that the government of France has done nothing in violation of the rights of property, except with relation to emigrants, who were considered as guilty for the act of flying: but is it not palpable, that filling prisons on suspicion, by arbitrary commitments, and emptying them by massacre—that the perpetual din of pillage and assassination—are culculated to fill men with alarm and terror—and to drive them to fly

* Mr. Sheridan's Speech.

not through guilt, but horror? By your murders you drive them away; and then pronouncing them emigrants, confiscate their estates! And this is called the security of property. The cry of aristocrat or traitor is followed by immediate imprisonment or death, and has been found an easy way of paying debts. Upon my inquiring of a correspondent what was become of a gentleman I had known at Paris, the answer was, that he was met in the street by a person considerably in his debt, who no sooner saw than he attacked him as a traitor, and ordered him to gaol. No known massacre was committed in that prison, but my acquaintance was heard of no more. It is easy to conjecture what became of the debt. Should the dæmons of discord effect a revolution in this kingdom, and bring Mr. Legislator Paine, (tired of being called the punchinello of the Convention*), once more to Thetford, Sandwich, or Lewes, he would not find it difficult thus to satisfy all his creditors, however numerous—he would come well prepared with a French recipe for wiping off all their *scores*. In a country where such things are possible, every tie that binds property is broken. To imagine its security is a folly too gross to be endured, and to assert it, is a falsehood that should excite no emotion but contempt.

* The name given him in the *Journal de Marat*, March 5, 1793.

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In a parish in the Clermontois (*Croté-le-Roy*), the steward of a gentleman residing at a distance, came to receive the rent of three considerable farmers. He was told that the Convention had decreed equality, and that paying rent was the most unequal thing in the world ; for it was a man who did much to receive a little, paying to one, who receiving much, did nothing at all. The steward replied, that their joke might possibly be good, but that he came not for wit, but money ; and money he must have ; he was ordered instantly to depart or to stay and be hanged. The proprietor demanded justice, but in vain ; the municipality was applied to ; and the only result was, that body (the vestry) ordering the farmers to yield up the lands ; they were taken possession of by themselves, in deposit redeemable for the nation ; and actually divided in portions among the labouring poor, that is among themselves. What the event may be is nothing to the purpose : what becomes in the mean time of the Right of Property ! The probable event however is, that the proprietor will be driven to emigration, for the mere convenience of retaining their plunder.

It can hardly be doubted but that robbery, even of land itself, must spread throughout the kingdom, when the Committee of General Security could thus report to the Convention :—*The national resources*
may

may be augmented by imposing contributions upon persons of fortune, personnes aisées, and the obstinate, who wait, with tranquillity at home, the event of the Revolution *. Contributions imposed on persons for two reasons; first, for the crime of being men of fortune; and, secondly, for remaining in tranquillity! With such a legislation can property be respected?

With such a principle, recognised in the Convention, we need not ask how taxes are levied.—The poor and small proprietors of a few acres, who every where form the majority of each municipality, escape all taxation, but are vigilant in forcing those of more considerable property to pay to the last farthing; and as all taxes are assessed and levied by the parochial vote, at assemblies, to which all resort, the men without property order every thing at will, and have various ways, much more effective, for the division of property, than a direct agrarian law would be.

Let the farmers of this kingdom represent to themselves a picture of what their situation would be, if their labourers their servants, and the paupers whom they support by poor's rates, were all armed, and, in some measure, regimented, and in possession of the vestry, voting not only the money

* Monit. Orl. 18.

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to be raised by rates, but the division of it among themselves; decreeing what the price of all the farmer's products should be; what wages should be paid to servants, and what pay to labourers. Under such a system of government, I beg to ask, what security would remain for a single shilling in the pockets of those who are at present in a state of ease and affluence? And whether such a tyranny would not be worse than that of the most determined despotism at present in Europe?

While the farmer is thus exposed to parochial oppression, at the mercy of those who were so lately his inferiors, and who are even fed and supported by him, he is not exempted from attacks of a very different nature; to authorise the seizure of horses and arms, was, in the National Assembly, a measure of violence and tyranny; but as it issued from the legislature *de facto*, it had the authority of admitted power; but the municipality of Paris have gone much further; September 13, the minister of the home department complains to the Assembly, that the commissioners of the municipality of Paris are sent into the country with such arbitrary orders, as are utterly inconsistent with his own responsibility; their orders are signed by four of the administrators of the public safety, for seizing suspected persons and precious effects.

*Pour s'emparer des personnes suspectes & des effets
D précieux*

precieux *. Seizing suspected persons and precious effects! A very pretty commission in a land of liberty; and given, not by the legislative body, but by a corporation! The corporation of a town sends commissioners, in other words, despotic monarchs, into the country, to arrest and to plunder, and this under the eyes of the legislature. When the republican reader of Mr. Paine, on corporations in England, is well satiated with *rights*, it would do him good to take the actions of French municipalities as a comment on the text.

The abuses and plunder in the sale of the possessions of the emigrants, may be easily conceived from the complaint which Sillery makes in the Convention:—"The furniture of the chateau of Nangus, belonging to the Baron de Bretueil, was worth at least 1,500,000 liv. and has produced scarcely any thing. Six tapestries of the Gobelins, which cost 30,000 liv. in money, were sold for 2800 liv. in assignats. A clock that cost 24,000 liv. in money, sold for 800 in paper †." Such is the virtuous administration of the *res publica* among republicans!

Marat lets us into the secret of the wealth of members of the Convention, who were once as poor as himself.—*Barbaroux tenoit les cordons de*

* Monit. Sept. 14.

† Dec. 31, 1792.

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la bourse comme il tenoit la clef du bonhoir (he alludes to his being the lover of Madame Rolland), at least if we may judge by the facility with which he distributes assignats to the right and left. People have been astonished at the enormous expences of many members, who, like myself, have had no other patrimony than debts. Although married, these gentlemen keep girls, give great suppers, and their wives are always at the theatres.—Valassé is royalist and spends enormously.—The father-in-law of Petion lives in a palace, dresses richly, drives his coach, keeps an excellent table, and bought the cellar of Egmont Pignatelli, which cost him 23,000 liv.—A footman of Montesquieu is colonel of the regiment of cavalry buffards braconniers, and at the same time contractor for furnishing them.—Gorfias, Dulaure, Poncelain, Rœderer, Caritat, Rabaud, all paid by Rolland, in the 100,000 liv. *pour former l'esprit public* *.

The watch-word, from one end of France to the other, is *equality*; they join liberty with it, as mountebanks annex a favourite epithet to the nostrum, whose only object is the money in the pockets of the credulous. But after all rank, title, nobility, and distinction have been abolished, what do they mean by equality? They talk of equality, not because they know what it means, but because

* *Journal de Marat*, No. 112.

others have talked of it. Marat remarks, that the people follow one another like sheep:—*C'est un terrible torrent que celui de l'exemple car toute peuple est naturellement montennier* *. The word is absurd, if it attaches not to property, for there can be no equality while one man is rich and another poor. But the preceding facts speak what the new equality is, in terms too clear to be misunderstood. *I am not astonished to see*, says Buzot, *an arret come to us under the name of Momoro, whom I, as president in the department of Eure, heard preaching the division of estates; but I am truly so to find such a man presiding in one of the sections of Paris* †.

We hear it asserted in England, that property is not attacked in France: *there* you hear no such assertions: on the return of the commissioners, members of the Convention, from the riots at Chartres, where they were nearly destroyed, it was asserted on facts, in the Convention itself, *that all the principles of an agrarian law were in agitation* mis en avance ‡.

Before we quit this subject of the security of property at present in France, let us examine shortly the case of that most interesting portion of

* *Journal de Marat*, Mars 5, 1793.

† *Monit.* Oct. 13.

‡ *Dec.* 2.

property, the crop in the hands of the farmer: we know well in England, from the conviction of long experience, that if this species of property is not sacred, all the classes of the society instantly suffer; it is a vital wound that affects the whole system.

The late crop in that kingdom is said to be plentiful; but natural plenty, under a government of anarchy, avails little; the mob prohibiting the free transport of corn, the immediate consequence was so high a price in many districts, that the people found it more convenient to *seize* the corn than to *pay* for it: this, of course, added every where to the mischief; for the farmers were not ready to carry their products into the jaws of plunder. These distractions—these blessings of a government that had the power of converting even good crops into the means of famine, drew from the minister of the home department, threats even of violence; he wrote to a variety of cities, from all which papers it would be too tedious to give extracts. He thus expresses himself to Tours: “ The municipalities ought to use all possible means of persuasion with the farmers, for engaging them to supply the markets; for I must tell you, that if the possessors of corn resist these *paternal* invitations, MEANS OF EXTREMITY must be used against them: *on sera bien contraint d'employer en-*

*vers eux les moyens extremes *.*" It is worth the attention of English farmers, to reflect well on the nature of this case: their brethren in France, content with a moderate and fair price for their corn, carry it freely to market; the operations of the people raise this price; and then, to revenge the result of their own violence, they plunder. Such a conduct is sure to create, at least, apprehensions of famine; and to obviate it, the minister does not threaten the mob, from whom all the mischief arises, but the FARMERS; he threatens them with EXTREMITIES, as a punishment for having been plundered by the rabble—by the nation. If the farmer, thus robbed, has the misfortune to be a proprietor, and particularly a large proprietor, he has first the oppression of paying those taxes which an armed populace will not pay; and, that he may be able to do this, his corn is seized by the consumer, and he is threatened with extremities by the minister; as if any extremities could be greater than taking his crops by violence: if more, however, was not meant, the folly of the denunciation was equal to the knavery of it. Those intellects which can see any difference between such a government and the cudgel of a Turkish basha, are much more acute than mine.

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The same minister writes to the Convention, Oct. 15.—“ I am informed that the overseers of the military subsistences do not cease to fly through the country, and to force, with arms in their hands, the farmers to furnish their commodities. Such practices destroy every measure of order, and infinitely impede the free circulation of corn. I cannot dissemble with the Convention, that this conduct of the military contractors tends to spread disorder every where, and that if they continue to take by force, or at their own price, provision from the farmers, it will be impossible to insure the supply of Paris.”

Now this, if possible, exceeds every thing the Jacobin administration, acting on the ideas of Jacobin liberty, could devise to shew their perfect contempt of the whole farming race. He states the glaring magnitude of the evil to the Convention; and what is his conclusion? Why, he tells them, that if such things are allowed, it will *be impossible to supply Paris!!* There is the only evil; as to the poor plundered farmers, he allows, indeed, that robbing them is *a disorder*, but when he sums up to impress the legislature with the necessity of paying attention to the evil, he recurs solely to the supply of Paris! If Paris is supplied, all is well—as to the farmers they may take care of

themselves. Let those who tell us in England, that the Revolution of France was favourable in the beginning to agriculture (particularly in tithes) consider the value of a FREE MARKET; and then our farmers will not be long discovering, that no exemptions, no such favours will prove a recompence, for being forced, the pike or broad-sword in hand, to sell at the price offered by those who brandish the weapon over their heads. No wonder that such measures should starve the towns, as well as ruin the country; and that the commissioners of subsistence should report, that *the penury of grain, in the great cities, is extreme**.

In all these and a thousand other instances, we see the living and effective consequences of Paine's doctrines; he expatiated on the luxury of great estates, and recommended their seizure; French practice realized the doctrine, and doubtless there were French farmers, who rejoiced at the spectacle of all the great properties of the kingdom being levelled by the nation; they did not however foresee, that it would be their own turn next; that the principle of equality being once abroad, would infallibly level ALL property; and would give to the beggar, without a loaf, but with a pike on his

* Monit. Nov. 16.

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shoulder, the means of levelling the enormous inequality between his own wallet, without a kernel, and the well-stored granary of a warm farmer. Let ours, therefore, never forget, that the same principle which attacks a property of 40,000*l.* a year, because it is too large relatively to other properties, attacks also a farm of 200*l.* a year, for the same reason; nay, of 50*l.* a year, because that also is large, when compared with the property of those who have little. And let us all be well persuaded, that the fearful events, at present passing in France, with a celerity of mischief that surpasses equally all that history has to offer, or fancy to conceive, afford a spectacle interesting to every man who possesses PROPERTY; and to none more than to farmers. The quarrel now raging in that once flourishing kingdom, is not between liberty and tyranny, or between protecting and oppressive systems of government; it is, on the contrary, collected to a single point,—it is alone a question of property; it is a trial at arms, whether those who have *nothing*, shall not seize and possess the property of those who have *something*. A dreadful question—a horrid struggle, which can never end but in the equal and universal ruin of all; in which, he who gains by the loss of his neighbour, gains but to lose, in his turn, to some sturdier robber, till riot, confusion, and anarchy, render property but the signal of

of invasion, and poverty the best shield against the attacks and tyranny of the mob *.

Such being the state of government, liberty, and property in France, I shall unite these facts in one general conclusion, and venture the assertion, that the Revolution has absolutely ruined that kingdom. I may be told, perhaps, in reply, that she carries no more appearance of ruin at this moment, than many months or years past. Her arms are even victorious on every side.

The inquiry into that degree of depression or violence which properly constitutes national ruin, would lead into an extensive and unnecessary discussion. If nothing merits that description but foreign

* Pursue the declaration of rights through every article, and it will be found that there is not a single article registered as an imprescriptible right of man, that has not been violated under circumstances of the most odious and abominable cruelty.

An Englishman is proud of the idea of his house being his castle; see the practice of *Jacobin* government in this respect! "Decreed, that the municipalities are authorised to search the houses of all persons for arms, and to take an account of horses and carriages applicable to the war." And soon after their absolute seizure decreed. This was sounding the alarm bell, in order to give up the houses of all the gentlemen in the kingdom to the plunder of brigands; and this by the legislature itself—elected by personal representation.

If we are asked what apology the tyrants of Paris have to make for their actions, their answer is STATE EXPEDIENCY; which an English reformer calls the *offspring of hell*,

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conquest, Morocco was in no state of ruin under a barbarian, who put 40,000 men to death with his own hands; nor is Turkey ruined under the dominion of horse-tails and bow-strings. To every purpose of sober argument, the danger of life and property is effective ruin.

Life and property in France are in this situation, if raised a single point above the level of the populace; a gigantic and devouring despotism has levelled in the dust all security to those whose properties raise them above the mob. In one word, LAW does not reign; there is a power every where superior: a despotic authority may fill the ranks of their armies, as the slaves of Algiers are made to arm and to fight, but the kingdom is as much ruined with victory attending her standard, as if the German banners were flying at Paris, Marseilles, and Bourdeaux.

The old government of France, with all its faults, was certainly the best enjoyed by any considerable country in Europe, England alone excepted; but there were many faults in it which every class of the people wished to remedy. This natural and laudable wish made democrates in every order, amongst the possessors of property, as well as among those who had none. At the commencement of the Revolution, France possessed a very

very flourishing commerce ; the richest colonies in the world ; the greatest currency of solid money in Europe ; her agriculture was improving ; and her people, though from too great population much too numerous for the highest degrees of national prosperity, yet were more at their ease than in many other countries of Europe ; the government was regular and mild ; and, what was of as much consequence as all the rest, her benignant sovereign, with a patriotism unequalled, was really willing to improve, by any reasonable means, the constitution of the kingdom. All these circumstances, if compared with England, would not make the proper impression. They are to be compared alone with what has since ensued ; and her present state may thus, with truth, be correctly described.—Her government an anarchy, that values neither life nor property. Her agriculture fast sinking ; her farmers the slaves of all ; and her people starving. Her manufactures annihilated. Her commerce destroyed ; and her colonies absolutely ruined. Her gold and silver disappeared ; and her currency paper so depreciated, by its enormous amount of 3000 millions, besides incredible forgeries, that it advances, with rapid strides, to the entire stagnation of every species of industry and circulation. Her national revenue diminished three-fourths. Her cities scenes of revolt, massacre, and famine ; and her provinces plundered

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by gangs of banditti. Her future prospect of peace and settlement, depending on a constitution that is to be *formed* by a convention of rabble, and *sanctioned* by the *sans culottes* of the kennel. It is not a few insulated crimes on some undeserving men ; it is a series of horrid proscription, spreading far and near ; pervading every quarter of the kingdom ; it is the annihilation of rank, of right, of property ; it is the destruction of the possessors of more than half France ; it is the legislation of wolves, that govern only in destruction : and all these massacres, and plunderings, and burnings, and horrors of every denomination, are so far from being necessary for the establishment of liberty, that they have most effectually destroyed it. In one word, France is at present absolutely without government ; anarchy reigns ; the poniard and the pike of the mob give the law to all that once formed the higher classes, and to all that at present mocks with the shew of legislation. The mob of Paris have been long in the actual possession of unrivalled power ; they will never freely relinquish it : if the Convention presumes to be free, it will be massacred ; and, after a circle of new horrors, will sink (should foreign aid fail) into the despotism of triumvirs or dictators : the change will be from a Bourbon to a butcher !

“ All

"All former Revolutions," says Paine, "till the American, had been worked within the atmosphere of a court, and never on the great floor of a nation *;" unfortunately for this miserable copy, she worked on a floor broad enough †; her basis was the blood and property of France. The picture has no resemblance in "the *insipid* state of hereditary government ‡." She found in "scenes of horror and perfection of iniquity ‡," what "man is up to ‡." It is easy to see what they have lost; as to their gains, they have assignats, cockades, and the music of *ça ira*; it may be truly said, that they have made a wise barter: they have given their gold for paper; their bread for a ribbon; and their blood for a song. Heaven preserve us from the phrenzy of such exchanges! and leave Revolutions for the "order of the day ‡," for "the morning of reason rising upon man ‡" in France.

* Rights of Man.

† The Convention declares, in the name of the French nation, that it will grant assistance to all people who wish to recover their liberty, and charges the executive power with giving the necessary orders to the generals for giving succour to such people. Nov. 19, ordered to be printed in all languages.

‡ Paine.

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Such are the consequences of the French Revolution. Our next inquiry is, from what have these evils arisen? They may be attributed to three prominent features in the new system of their *soi-disant* philosophers.—1. Personal Representation.—2. The Rights of Man.—3. Equality.

If there is any one circumstance to which all the horrors that have passed in France may be more properly attributed than to any other, it is the double representation given to the *tiers etat* by Mr. Neckar, directly contrary to every respectable authority*. The preponderancy of the people within the walls, united with the spirit of revolt without, was manifest in a moment; the court divided; and the King, conscientious and honest; these were not arms to meet the pressure of the moment. The mob triumphed; and all the world knows what followed. If a tree is to be judged by its fruits, we may fairly assert, that personal representation, which gives to the lowest of the people a direct influence in the government, must lead in a great empire and a great capital to absolute anarchy, such as has ruined France.

II. * Paine says, that the parliament of Paris recommended it. He ought to have known better; for what was he at Paris at the time?

In any representative government, if persons only are represented,—that is to say, if a man without a shilling deposes equally with another, who has property, and if men in the former situation are ten times more numerous than those in the latter; and if the representatives, so chosen, sit for so short a time as to vote truly the wills of their constituents, it follows, by direct consequence, that all the property of the society is at the mercy of those who possess nothing; and could theory have blundered so stupidly, as to suppose for a moment, that attack and plunder would not follow power in such hands; let it recur to France for *fact*, to prove what reason ought to have foreseen.

The abstract Rights of Man, most preposterous of all ideas, which in fact have no *political* existence whatever, have effected all the mischief; since those rights, which cannot be exerted, or become efficient without the destruction of other rights, and the rights of other men, equally admitted, are palpably visionary—the children of playful brains—but impossible in practice. But the French had these dreams; they imagined that personal representation would recognize and secure such rights, and they established their government accordingly:—they ridiculed the constitution of England for depending on a balance of powers; in which a *corporation of aristocracy* has a negative
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on the Rights of Man ; and wove a web of theory from the phantasy of their brains, to secure those rights from all controul. Is this a case in point? Is this a great political experiment on personal representation? Let the works of Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. Christie, and many other able writers, who have printed warm panegyrics on the French constitution, answer this question. They have answered it decisively ; for the faults found, if any, are, that the representation was not personal enough ; the result has shewn it *so* personal, as to have annihilated property ; this part of the question therefore is decided as soon as proposed.

There is a party in this kingdom who call loudly for a reform in the representation of the people, and who would have such reformation give a right of election indiscriminately to all mankind : I am myself in the number of those who wish a reform, but not of such a complexion, nor at a moment like this ; I wish the middle classes of landed property better represented ; I wish a new member for every county, elected by men who possess not less than an hundred a year in land, and not more than a thousand ; and an equal number of members deducted from the most objectionable boroughs. But I would live at Constantinople rather than at Bradfield, if the wild and preposterous propositions founded on the Rights of Man, were to become effective in this kingdom. In other words,

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I have property; and I do not choose to live where the first beggar I met, may, the sabre in one hand, and *Rights of Man* in the other, demand a share of that which a good government tells me is *my own*. But my idea of a reform is as speculative as the rest, and therefore merits not more attention: rotten boroughs are found, on experience, not dangerous; of what account then the objections of speculatists?

The fact is, that the French constitution was founded *absolutely* on personal representation. By the letter of the law, certain persons were excluded, but by collateral parts of the same system, the mob was armed; and the authors of the Revolution might not perhaps foresee the event, that elections made at the point of the bayonet, would be at the power of the bayonet. Examine not the letter of a visionary code, but EXPERIMENT, in the history of Paris, Marseilles, &c. from the first moment of the troubles.

That many who wish the reform, on popular principles, of that parliament, under the auspices of which we enjoy the security which makes us every hour (of anarchy in France) the object of the envy of other nations—that many who wish this reform, do it on meritorious motives, I have not a doubt:—they think, on theory, that personal representation may be consistent with the
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security of property; much as they are deceived in this idea, yet their error was once respectable *. They say to themselves, so far I would go and no farther †; but they forgot, that by going so far they

* Of such men, consisted many of the Constituent Assembly in France; but the absolute folly of the idea is now a matter of experiment: that assembly made the trial. They formed a government on the *Rights of Man*, and the foundation they built upon was so slippery, that the whole edifice has tumbled about their ears in a single year. I hardly know any thing more nauseous than the conversation one now and then hears at present on those fine theories, delivered pretty much in the same accents as a twelvemonth ago, when the Constituent Assembly was as much praised as it is now condemned; such men forget that it is theory no longer: it is now fact and history; the experiment was made; we have seen the result; it failed totally and completely; in the name of common sense, let us, as farmers, regard experience only; and when these eternal theorists still recur to new visions of their heated brains, let us reply, *the thing is tried; that method of drilling has been experimented and found good for nothing; the crop did not answer; the principles of farming are the principles of government; when you have experiment for your guide, will you resort to theory? When experiment has damned half a dozen theories from the same quarter, will you still listen to new fancies, and go to work again, because the same men tell you they have new imaginations for your employment? The leading conclusion, deducible from the French experiment, and written in characters, which he that runs may read, is this, IF PERSONS ARE REPRESENTED, PROPERTY IS DESTROYED. We know then what to think of the proposals for reform hitherto made in this kingdom.*

† The first leaders in the Revolution said this, and they now feel the consequence. Neckar, who gave the *double tiers*, banished with the loss of an hundred thousand pounds; Siéyès who said *le tiers est tout* in disgrace; and Barnave, who asked if the first blood

they have given the power from their hands, by which alone others are prevented from pushing matters a little further; and that these again are impelled by a third set, who drive at the Rights of Man, and pulling down all that exists at present, with the temple of Dagon, by the Sampson of the mob. However respectable, well-meaning, but wrong-headed, men may be for their motives, let it not be imagined for a moment, that there is any thing respectable in the levellers, your fellows of the Rights of Man, whose principles are not a jot better than those of highwaymen and house-breakers; for the object of both is *equalizing property*.

Mr. Wyvil, in his late pamphlet, talks of *temperate reformation*, and of *pointing the zeal of the people to a moderate correction of grievances* (p. 89).

blood spilled was so pure, in a dungeon; *le beau jour* of Bailly shines at present in a garret at London; La Fayette feels in the prison of Wezel, that insurrection is not *la plus saint des devoirs*; and had Mirabeau been now alive, his head would have been on a pike; and the minister Rolland, who, in his impudent letter to the King, said, that as *the voice of truth is not heard in courts, revolutions become necessary*, now, crouching under the uplifted pike, finds, in the dispensations of Jacobin justice, that the voice of truth is heard as little in conventions as in courts, and curses the folly that called for revolutions; Petion pelted and hissed, Marat carried in triumph*, and Manuel with his throat cut, continue the revolutions of the wheel of retribution. See these changes admirably touched in various passages of *La Dernière Tableau de Paris*, par M. Peltier.

* *Le Patriote Français*, March 11, 1793.

As if it was possible, after rousing, by inflammatory publications, the mobbish spirit, that you could draw the line of *moderation*, beyond which the populace should not pass! You want to correct grievances by means of *the people*; who, with power to effect the purpose, must have power to do much more. If they have that power, will they use it? Go to Paris for the answer.

But that something more than temperate and moderate reform is really the object, we have an undoubted proof, in a work published the other day, by one of the heads of the reforming party*, who praises the French Revolution as not the *reformation* of a government, but its *utter destruction* (its *dissolution*, in the author's own words); and erecting in its room THAT which proved, so soon after the author dated his letter, and before he published it, a MONSTER; and is now the bloodiest and most detestable tyranny that has blotted the annals of modern Europe.

Power in the hands of *the people*, by means of personal representation, has ruined France. And the question in England is, whether the farmers and land proprietors shall preserve their property secure, by one and all considering the system with

* Major Cartwright.

the horror it merits; or shall, by doubt and hesitation, unite with the enemies of public peace, and hazard all that we possess at present.

I cannot well understand on what principles republicans and friends of liberty, can now give their approbation to this eventful Revolution. To be consistent with their own doctrines, they ought to hold the actors, on the theatre of French affairs, as the most fatal enemies to human liberty the world has ever seen: they have not only shewn mankind in a new and hideous aspect of ingratitude, past all example, but they have proved that liberty, in the abstract and in theory, is unfit for the mass of mankind, and even pernicious to their interests, and the interest of practical freedom. They have given a lesson of tyranny to all the governments of the world; they have given a panegyric on the perpetuity of political darkness, and on the propagation of political ignorance.

Personal representation in cities, must be apt to fall into the hands of a few of the most daring, restless, and profligate of the mob: of this, we have an instance, strangely remarkable, in the case of Paris; in that city there are about 150,000 voters, yet the number who have been brought to poll have varied from 9000 to 12,000; it is therefore, evident that the mass of the inhabitants, find-

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ing they could not vote freely and in safety, would not vote at all. What a satire is this on the universal suffrage of the mob, who regulate the right of their neighbours voting, as they distribute justice—by the pike! “Materials fit for all the purposes of government,” says Paine, “may be found in every town.” He certainly means the pike, for that is the chief material in the new system.

“*It is well known,*” says the deputation of Finistère, at the bar of the Convention, “*that the sections of Paris are held by at most fifty individuals, to whom all cede with a facility perfectly incredible; astonished at such a general desertion, we have been careful to inquire the cause, and have been assured, that the only reason is, that none had the power of freely expressing their opinion without running the greatest danger. We are shocked to think of such a popular despotism*.*” The federates at the bar, January 13th:—“*The public force is disorganized, and poniards intimidate the good citizens. Spare not the liberticide members, who vote in favour of Louis, we devote them to infamy.*—Marseilles to the Sections of Paris. If personal representation has, in the short period of four years, given the government of France into the hands of the mob—with two legislative bodies in succession most

* Monit. Dec. 26.

completely devoid of property; and if the consequence has been the destruction of property, and the delivery of its possessors, to be butchered or banished, we are surely justified in asserting that
**THE EXPERIMENT OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATION
 HAS BEEN MADE AND TOTALLY FAILED ***

* The Jacobins boast the government of America too soon to have experiment for their support, all countries fully settled must have a numerous and indigent poor: America with immense deserts of fertile land at command, has no indigent poor to govern; she is, therefore, exempt from the great difficulty of all government—but the time will come when she is no longer free from its pressure—when she has a numerous and indigent poor, poisoned or enlightened by a licentious press, it will then be found whether her system is so perfect as some pretend. “The truth is,” says Dr. Wilson, “that in our governments the supreme, absolute, and uncontrollable power remains in the people, as our constitutions are superior to our legislature; so the people are superior to our constitutions. Indeed the superiority in this last instance is much greater; for the people possess over our constitutions, controul in act as well as in right,” *Commentaries on the American Constitutions*. So able a writer, doubtless, is not mistaken in this; but if the fact is true, anarchy and confusion, and the concomitant destruction of property, will inevitably be the fate of that country, when indigence is found in the mass of her people. If they are in truth paramount, they will pass laws for their own relief, and how is that to be effected without attacking properties that will not want the epithets of unnecessary, luxurious, or aristocratic, for a pretence? To suppose that the mob will possess the sovereign authority *in act* as well as in right, and remain hungry, is a false—and worthy only of the theories with which we have been amused: and who has instructed us clearly in the importance of such a character, as General Washington keeping heterogeneous parts to one common centre?

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The Rights of Man were the next pillar of the French system, and proved, in this eventual experiment, as visionary and mischievous as personal representation. The constitution was built on a declaration of these rights; and, as if every paragraph of the code had been formed only to be broken, practice has torn the whole into fritters, or trampled it under feet, with a contempt it never experienced in any other country. So that a man would go much readier to Constantinople than to Paris, for the exercise. Its commentator calls out for answers to his performance.—The French Revolution is an answer round and complete; there is not a page it does not reply to; there is not a position it does not damn: and the author has the daily mortification to see his marvellous efforts surpassed by his colleagues in the legislative banditti, who arrive at the same end by a shorter road; by engraving the Rights of Man, with poniards, dipt in the best blood of France.

When that prince of incendiaries, reviewing a train of his projects, asks, with an air of triumph, after each, *would not this be a good thing? This surely would be a good thing!* In like manner, take the

the French declaration of the Rights of Man, and there is hardly an article to be found, to which the same writer, and an hundred others, would not annex the same question, *is not this good? Can you deny this?* But concentrating the rays of right into one focus, and giving it in a declaration to the people as the imprescriptible right of man—the right of resistance against oppression became the power to oppress; the right to liberty crammed every prison on suspicion; the right to security fixed it at the point of the pike; the right to property was the signal of plunder; and the right to life became the power to cut throats. **ARE THESE GOOD THINGS?** If declarations of right and governments, founded on them are really good, the result must be good also. But these are the good things in practice, that flow in a direct line from the good things of French theory.

The declaration of rights, says Paine, is of more value to the world than all the laws and statutes that have yet been promulgated. It stares corruption in the face. The venal tribe are all alarmed: from such opposition the Revolution receives an homage. The more it is struck, the more sparks it will emit; and **THE FEAR IS IT WILL NOT BE STRUCK ENOUGH.**—I copy this insanity, to bring to the reader's recollection the confidence with which this charlatan predicted, in opposition to the predictions of Mr.

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Burke; *whose ideas*, he says, *tumbled over and destroyed one another, for want of a polar truth*. The polar truths, by which Paine steered across the boundless and unfathomable ocean of the French Revolution, make one smile; he now finds, sorely to the cost of his reputed penetration, that all the polarity which guided him was a *will-o'-the-wisp* meteor, that led his frail bark o'er rocks and quick-sands:—yet, ingulphed as he is, he says, *Mr. Burke takes a ground of sand*. Events have amply told us which of them was upon sand.

The madness of transferring such rights to Britain belongs to the mechanics and labourers at Stockport*,—who, complaining that the useful science of politics is *neglected*, assemble to diffuse it; they resolve that all men are born equal in their rights, that the sovereignty of every nation ought to be invested in the people as their birth-right; who have the chief right to possess all that labour produces: and it is a very curious circumstance in these resolutions, that though they resolve that the liberty of the press ought to be inviolable, yet do they not give one atom of a resolution, that any man has a right to property, except the right of the mechanic and the labourer to all that labour produces. These are resolutions perfectly congenial in their purview, to that degree of security to

* Manchester Herald, Sept. 1.

property

property which the Revolution produced in France. These labourers and mechanics may tell us, that *they detest riots*; but as they are so deep in the *science* of politics, they ought to know that their object and their resolutions tend pointedly and directly to the utter ruin and destruction of all government, peace, and security of either life or property. So also in the resolutions of a similar society at Derby *, they speak of *temperate and honest discussions*, and call on other societies to act with *unanimity and firmness, until the people be too wise to be imposed upon; and their influence in the government be commensurate with their dignity and importance*. Can any person, warm from the recital of the horrors committed by the "swinish multitude" in France—by the most enlightened of all the mobs of France—who have most studied the *science of politics*, and most frequented societies familiar to these—can any man of property, acquainted with these abominations—read such resolution without indignation? *Temperate and honest discussions!* Why the discussions of the Jacobins were doubtless once temperate; their honesty is another question. But let us not be deceived by smooth words at the outset. These men demand THAT which they cannot have without possessing the power of seizing our property and cutting our throats—they associate and combine, in order to attain their end.

* Manchester Herald, August 18.

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To suppress at once, by vigorous and decisive measures, such hot-beds of sedition and plunder, is the first duty of parliament; resolutions less offensive than these began the business in France; we have seen the event. *Temperate resolutions* were the theory; plunder, rapine, and murder the practice.

Give us our rights, is an expression which has been used with singular emphasis; the reply once proper, was an abstract reasoning on the nature of those rights: we have now something much surer to direct our judgments; and can answer with strict reference to the facts that govern the question, "you have your rights; you are in possession of every right that is consistent with safety to the life and property of others;—to give you more will endanger both,—to give you *much* more will infallibly destroy them, and eventually yourselves. You have, therefore, **ALL** your rights; for you have all that are consistent with your happiness; and those who associate to gain more, seek, by means which they know to be the high road to confusion, to seize what is not their right, at the expence of crimes similar to those that have destroyed the first kingdom of the world.

It is common to hear it asserted in France, that the ruin of the constitution, established on the Rights of Man, was owing only to the *perfidy* of the
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the court, and not to those *Rights*, which is a wretched sophistry; these men do not perceive that that perfidy was a part of the constitution which included a court; if courts can be perfidious, you are to suppose they will be so; and if you have not so provided as to turn that perfidy to the benefit of the people, you confess at once that your constitution is visionary, and if you must destroy it, **THE EXPERIMENT FAILED.** The second experiment, which is now in execution, fails equally; for there is no provision whatever to secure to the representatives of the people the obedience of the people; and we accordingly find, that all is anarchy, on their own Jacobin authority; in the first experiment there was no security against the perfidy of a court; and in the second, none against the violence of the people; to get rid of one evil they plunge into another, till, in the accumulation of opposite mischiefs, there is no better relief than Marat's grand specific of cutting off 150,000 heads. In this argument, I take the Jacobin ground of supposing the court perfidious; which is an impudent lye, for a prisoner, deprived of his rights, cannot be perfidious.

Perhaps it will be said the present experiment is not finished, and that when a better executive power is established, things will go well; but this is absolutely inadmissible; for the whole force and

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colour of Jacobin argument in England is, that the legislative power is too weak, and the executive too strong; and that the remedy of this evil is to let the Commons be really the representative of the people: now this *is* the case in France—and what is the evil? Why, precisely, that the people will not obey the men chosen by themselves;—they do not love the Convention enough to have confidence in it; this is an incurable evil, which no modification of the executive can effect; it strikes at the heart of personal representation—the mob elects, and the mob does not know how to chuse, and still less to obey.

III.

As to equality, the last support of the French system, it is too farfical and ridiculous to merit a serious observation,—it is worthy only of Monsieur *Egalité!* who has wasted three hundred thousand pounds a year, in order to stand on record the first fool in Europe, and to give the better part of his countrymen occasion to call that assumption great impudence; for he who was below all, could be *equal* to none. A genius, who sacrificed the first property of any subject in Europe, and the name of Bourbon, to become the subject of debate in an assembly of taylors, stay-makers, barbers, and butchers, whether he should not be banished from

from that country which he had disgraced by his crimes!

The equal right of all citizens to equal laws, was declared in the first constitution:—Equality of right to equal justice,—that in the law all are equal;—this equality was decreed by the Constituent Assembly, and clearly ascertained to be the law of the land; the new declaration of equality must therefore mean something more, or it meant nothing; if equality of rights were only in contemplation, why call the year 1792 the first year of equality? the fourth of liberty, and first of equality? A clearer proof cannot be desired, that the equality of 1792 was not the equality of 1789; let the writers and speakers who assert the term in the two points to mean the same thing, reconcile the absurdity if they are able. To the apprehension of common understanding, property was glanced at;—that the French populace so understood it, there is abundant proof indeed, for propositions were immediately made for the equal division of wealth, and received in a manner that left no doubt of the measure being perfectly to their taste; and these propositions have been carried into execution much more than commonly admitted in England; the peasantry paying no taxes, while they force their richer neighbours to pay to the last shilling, is directly in point.

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But the curse of these principles of equality is, that they never can allow tranquility to be the inheritance of a people; supposing it possible for a country, infested with such doctrines, to be well governed, such good government will infallibly generate wealth and inequality; and by consequence the necessity of new civil wars and confusion to restore the equality, which would for ever tend to variation; thus, under such fine-spun principles, peace could never inhabit; tranquillity would be banished, even by the merits, supposing there were any, of the system; and new arrangements of property must be periodically made, at the caprice and tyranny of those who, possessing nothing, would look to confusion as their support, and to anarchy as their birth-right.

Such have been the three leading principles of the French Revolution; personal representation, the rights of man, and equality; and the question for us to decide upon (a greater question never was before a nation) is this:—shall we imitate the example of France, and by tampering with that constitution to which we owe all our prosperity, hazard so immense a stake of happiness? There are men to be found who demand this, and even societies associated to enforce

Reform.

As the question has been discussed to satiety, the observations that follow shall be brief:—it is not uncommon to hear the expression of *restoring the constitution to its original purity*.—Two words on this purity will not be entirely misplaced. This is an expression we often meet with in the writings and speeches of men, who apparently are not very intimately acquainted with the state of representation in former periods. It tends strongly to give an idea to the ignorant and unwary, that the constitution has declined, and is at present in a worse state for the liberty of the people than it was in former periods; and that the evils now complained of were not to be found in its practice or principles at times alluded to. There is no man acquainted with the history of England who does not know that this is a gross error, and that the circumstances now most complained of, such as inequality of representation and burgage tenures, took place ages before the Revolution, and were established before we had any regular constitution at all. Let us throw a rapid eye over a few instances, which will be sufficient to shew, that there never was, even in idea, such a principle as equal representation, and that as to the practice, no reformer has yet been able to shew its existence.

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Camden, who wrote in Queen Elizabeth's reign, speaking of Dunwich, says, *that it lies in solitude and desolation*. Orford, he says, was *once populous*. At Eye, he finds nothing but the *rubbish* of an old monastery, and the *ruins* of a castle. He says of Castle-Rising, *it is ruined, and as it were expiring for age*. Yet this place had its charter to send members in the last year of Philip and Mary; and Eye, in the 13th of Elizabeth. This looks very little like any attention to give places of consequence only that privilege. Camelford, in Cornwall, he says, *is a little village*. Lestwithiel *is a little town, and not at all populous*. St. Germain's, he calls *a small village of nothing but fishermen's huts*, yet this charter was no older than Elizabeth.

I have not time, at present, to search for the state of many burroughs in a former age, but these instances are sufficient to shew, not only that the constitution stood in this respect on as rotten a foundation in the reign of Elizabeth, as at present, but that charters for sending members to the House of Commons were actually granted to places of no kind of consideration. To what period then are we to look for that ideal perfection in this part of the constitution, which is not to be found in it at present?

Historians are agreed as to the Parliament of 1265, summoned by a usurper, being the origin

of the House of Commons *: the Earl of Leicester ordered the attendance of representatives, from such places only as he thought proper, that is, from such as were known to be in his interest; and it is now unknown, whether the knights of shires were not elected by the sheriffs. The legal monarchs followed this example, and gave the power of election to whatever towns they thought proper, and ordered, in many cases, in whom the right of election should reside. What reforming writer has presumed to shew a period in the number of centuries that have elapsed since, in which there ever existed, for one moment, an *equal* or a *personal* representation of the people? What then but empty factious nonsense is meant by the original purity of that system which was gradually formed in times of storm or despotism; and never deserved the name of settled freedom till the Revolution. I speak only of facts; as to the *principles* of the Constitution before that great æra, they are just what every writer pleases to call them; to term them *pure*, is *gratis dictum*; they may be pious or beautiful, or whatever the theory pleases; it is not theory we demand, but PRACTICE.

This is the proper answer to reports of committees—of our “friends”—sections of associations,

* See Appendix.

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for spreading discontent—off-sets of sedition, who detail the parliamentary influence of the Earl of Lonsdale, Lords Elliot, Edgecumbe, &c. and who take great pains to shew that a small number of voters, compared with the number of the people at large, elect the House of Commons. Well; you state the fact; but the fact simply stated means nothing—leads to no conclusions. Have you presumed to state what was the case 100 years ago—200 years—300 years past? in order to shew that the people once possessed something which they have now lost? No: you know what would be the event of that inquiry, and *therefore* you are silent! You state, that in the constitution of England 2600 persons return 320 members. What then? You might also have stated, that in the same constitution the King returns the whole House of Lords. You state a fact; but do you prove that fact an evil? How are we to know whether it be really an evil or a benefit? Are we to rely on our own experience for an answer, or shall we come to your theory for the decision? The question is in a nutshell. We feel that we are free under this constitution, that you want us to mend with French assistance. We know that English practice is good—we know that French theory is bad.—What inducement have we, therefore, to listen to your speculations, that condemn

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what all England feels to be good—and approve what all France experiences to be mischievous.

The fact is, that the present constitution of England was gradually extorted, sword in hand, from feudal sovereigns, deriving *their* rights from the sword of a conqueror: nobly extorted; but derived from no other right. It is now legally established, and has the sanction of ages to give it the veneration that, with wise men, belongs to ancient establishments; and those persons who demand the constitution of some preceding age (which they ought to demand, when they speak of *purity*, greater than that of the present age), as a system better than what we enjoy, are bound to name the period, when the liberty of the subject was in theory better defined, or in practice better protected.

There is indeed a period to which our reformers allude with singular pleasure, and which is in their contemplation oftener than they name it;—the republic in the middle of the last century; there was the *purity* admired by so many; a period that bore some resemblance to the present in France. The parliament which met in 1640, are termed by a female historian, “ Patriots, whose number, virtues, and abilities, were greater than had ever

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been convened in any age or country." If such men were guilty of enormities and tyranny, it must arise from the situation, and not from the peculiar structure of their bosoms. Two words will dispatch their actions: they passed a triennial bill, and sat themselves 13 years. They quarrelled with the King for levying 200,000*l.* a year illegally, and in five years they raised, by their own single authority, FORTY MILLIONS, fully equal to one hundred millions at present.—They were accused by one of their own party of dividing 300,000*l.* among their own members—An accusation highly probable, when it is upon record, that in the assessments of those infinite burthens they laid on the people, their own members were exempted, so as to be taxed only by one another—They instituted country committees, with power to fine, sequester, imprison, and corporally punish, without appeal, and without law—They put an imprimatur on the press—and they abolished the trial by jury against their own accusations—They pressed men into their armies, and then passed ordinances for punishing them if they ran away—The King and Parliament had never yet fixed an excise on BREAD, flesh, and every consumable commodity; but the Parliament alone did it without compunction. If this manual of tyranny is good, we should do wisely to repeat it. The whole ended, as might have been foreseen, in a pure despotism, as the present copy of it will do in France.

There cannot be a more serious, or a more awful subject for Parliament to enter upon, than that of any *alterations* in the constitution : that there could not be a better one, nobody will assert ; it may be possible, that a nation might enjoy the same blessings at a less expence ; but to give us a *change* under the name of an *improvement*, is a dangerous experiment. What is called a real representation of the people (that is, an equal representation) and biennial Parliaments, would certainly be a *great* change ; property now has the power of this realm ; and under such a change, population would have the power ; in some governments of America this is the case ; but America has no indigent poor, or at least very few, arising from plenty of land ; thus America is no example applicable to us. We see very exactly in France, what is the case of an indigent poor possessed of power. So great a change as taking the government of the kingdom from property, and giving it to population, is not *restoring* principles of purity, but establishing *new* ones, an absolutely untried experiment any where but in France. If it is once admitted that property ought to possess the power, it is of very little consequence whether the election is by burgage tenures or any other mode, as the men of the greatest property will find themselves in the house ; and as to the Crown, Orford and Harwich shew that it is as likely to lose a borough as to gain one. The question, however, is of such importance, that

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that reasoning ought not to be admitted; the **FACT** is, that property possesses the preponderancy of power at present in the House of Commons; the changes proposed, all tend to remove it from property to population; this is not a *restoration*, but an absolute *novelty*.

There are men pretending to be moderate, who argue for, and are ready to declare their approbation of the English constitution, as fixed in King, Lords, and Commons, considering the Commons as the representatives *of the people*; and they contend that as the Commons do purport to be a representation of the people, they wish for no other alteration in the government than to make that House *really* that which it purports to be. This is the most rational ground that any reformer can take, because here is a semblance of propriety. Very few words will be necessary to shew *from facts* that it is only a semblance.

I contend in reply, that it is mere theory to suppose that the House of Commons purports to be the representatives of the people, if by representation is meant *choice*. Being once chosen by the few, they represent the many *. They *purport* to be

* " Every member of the British parliament, though chosen by one particular district, when elected and returned, serves for the whole

be nothing more than what they *are*: and they are nothing more than this—men sitting in a senate, and forming a third branch of the legislature, chosen by certain bodies, who, by the constitution, have the privilege of electing them. They may be accurately described without using the word, or referring to the idea of representation. To call them the representatives of the people, is a very inaccurate mode of expression; they ought never to be called by any other name than the House of Commons, to distinguish them from the House of Lords. If they were *really* the representatives of *the people*, they might in theory be good, or better; but they would be something else than what *they are*, and consequently different from that which has rendered us a great, a free, and a happy nation.

But there is not the least reason to think that they were ever deemed the representatives of the people; certainly not the Knights for the 40s. qualification of electors, the value of money considered, was nearer 40l. of present money. The notion of representation and delegation of rights and privileges from the electors, has vitiated and

whole realm. For the end of his coming thither is not particular, but general; not barely to advantage his constituents, but the commonwealth, and to advise his Majesty, as appears from the writ of summons."

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turned to confusion so many ideas on the subject, because writers and parliaments themselves, to suit the purposes of a moment, have thought it for their interest to be esteemed something different than what they really are. The electors of members of parliament do not delegate powers, nor entrust privileges, if, by delegation, is meant the transfer of something possessed by those who depute; for the electors have neither those powers nor those privileges, and therefore cannot delegate them. But the members when elected, and in combination with the other branches of the legislature, assume, and possess, and give themselves such powers and privileges, which those did not possess who sent them. Hence, then, the septennial act was just as constitutional as the biennial.

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But, on the other hand, suppose a nation in any period of confusion or anarchy of all constituted powers, should, by universal consent and suffrage, elect a convention or parliament, for the purpose of declaring what in future shall be the *National Will*; here you have palpably all the ideas of representation realized, and such deputies ought to speak the direct voice of the people, but such a republic (for it could be nothing else), is a government as distinct from that of England as Algiers is; and our House of Commons has not the smallest resemblance with such an assembly in its origin, its progress,

progress, or its functions. It is not necessary to characterise such a government, the case of France is directly in point.

If the House of Commons were such representatives, and renewed in short parliaments, they would be guided by the passions, folly, and madness of the people; we see in France what that leads to: at present they are guided by their own wisdom. *But they are corrupt and bribed.* If they are bribed in order to act wisely it is an argument directly against you, and tends to prove that there is something on the verge of danger in all numerous assemblies, which, if not controuled by prerogative or influence, would hazard the public peace. We know, on experience, that they do act wisely, for nothing but a wise government can make a happy people. If the nature of such an assembly demands to be corrupted, in order to pursue the public good, who but a visionary can wish to remove corruption? Government certainly would have been carried on cheaper if honesty alone had induced our House of Commons to act as it is said corruption has induced them; but if the vices of mankind can, by a well poised constitution, be made to contribute to their good government, would it not be insanity to change the system, and imitate the French, who depend only on their virtues?

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Examine the House of Commons in whatever light you will, and it will be found to possess in the power of the purse so enormous an authority, that the other branches of the legislature are absolutely at its mercy: what prevents it from swallowing them up? Is it good to prevent it? Is it necessary even for the liberty of the people? If it is necessary, how best done? Would the best way of effecting it be popular representation and short parliaments, a system in which all corruption, or even influence, would be impossible? The obvious reply finishes the chain of reasoning from fact, and proves the utter absurdity of such propositions. But grant for a moment the expedience of the experiment, and suppose that you have such a House of Commons, on what will you then depend? On their moderation and virtue; but this moderation and virtue have not been tried. If the theory of what moderation may do, and the speculation of what virtue may effect, are as just grounds to build on as fact and experiment; in such case I am ready to agree, that we may, without impropriety, exchange the positive possession of what we enjoy at present, for the hope and expectation of something better; and to fix here, you have only to prove that theory is as satisfactory as practice. To which fine inquiry I leave you as one fairly on a par with the philosophy of France.

Still

Still the advocates for a reform return to the charge, and assert, that Parliament, as elected at present, does not speak the will of the people, and that a House of Commons ought to speak that will. The argument is a good one for those who relish theory. But I contend on the contrary line of fact, that the prosperity and happiness we have enjoyed for a century, and never so great as at present, is owing precisely to the House of Commons NOT speaking the will of the people; and I am founded in the fact so notorious to all the world, that such prosperity has grown to its present height under the influence of a House elected not by persons, but by property. If a parliament speaking therefore the voice *not of the people*, has made us what we are, and if National Assemblies speaking the voice of the people, have brought France to her present situation, I have a double experiment to support me in the assertion, that reforming or changing the constitution of our House of Commons, so as to make it speak some new voice, untried in this kingdom, would be a procedure on theory, and worthy of theorists only.

If corruption and influence have given a century of happiness to this kingdom, and if purity and patriotism can in four years so completely ruin an empire, as they have ruined our neighbour, I beg
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for one that the *vices* of England may govern me, and by no means the *virtues* of France; the vices of our government have wealth, ease, and prosperity in their train; the virtues of theirs operating by equal representation, biennial elections, and uncorrupt majorities, have brought with them bloodshed, anarchy, and ruin. The contrast carries decision in the front.

A word, however, might be said on the point of personal representation rendering the real will of the people supreme. The futility of the idea is demonstrated in the conduct of the Assemblies so chosen in France; their first merit on Jacobin principles is that of speaking the sovereign will of the people, by which expression is always understood *the majority*: but so truly abominable is this system of government, that there has not been a single instance of great and marked importance, in which the minority, and commonly a very small minority, has not, by means of terror, carried all before them. The Constituent Assembly acted, in defiance of their cahiers, which were the instructions given them by their constituents; and they did this with a mob raging at their doors, in their gallery, and even on their benches, and in the chair of their president. I mean in the fundamentals of the constitution, such as maintaining the monarchy, &c.; in many secondary objects of importance,

portance, the Constituent Assembly obeyed their cahiers, as I have shewn in another place. What that Assembly did that was good, is however of the least possible consequence, for the plainest of all reasons; they formed, at the same time, a constitution that could not support itself, and consequently the good things they did were committed to the winds. Whatever has appeared respectable in representation in France, was in that first Assembly; the second was mob; and for the third the kennels were swept. The second, at one stroke, knocked down all that was built by the first. It remains yet to be seen whether the third will not do the same by the second; every step they have hitherto taken has been a page from the code of anarchy. The National Assembly acted under the dominion of the pikes of Paris, witnesses that memorable vote consecrated to eternal infamy, when 280 voices having driven, by menaces and blood, and massacre, the majority to absence or silence, dethroned the King, and abolished the constitution, which all France had sworn to live and die with. The Convention, which has assembled since, have exhibited the same spectacle; have been incessantly bullied by the mob in the galleries; have voted with a pike at their throats, and existed in the hourly expectation of being allowed to exist no longer; murdered their prince by a majority of *five* voices, though their law required

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three-fourths at least for declaring guilt, or for pronouncing death; and the majority obtained by the menaces of the assassins paid by *Egalité*. The consummation of political infamy! The murder of the best prince that ever sat upon the throne of France: the only monarch that country ever knew, that was a real friend to liberty, or that ever sincerely wished to render his people truly happy. A great and awful lesson to all the princes of the world;—not a lesson teaching mildness; attention to complaints; an ear to the friends of innovation; a protection of arts, and literature, and philosophy; not an instruction to enlighten; not a call to teach the ignorant; not a wish to soften power into persuasion, or to change the stern dictates of authority for the mild voice of humanity and feeling. NO: this great abomination demands other sentiments; and ought to generate (for the real felicity of the human race) a tighter rein in the jaws of that monster, the worst and most hideous caricature of human depravity, the metaphysical, philosophical, atheistical, Jacobin republican;—abhorred for ever, for holding out to all the sovereigns of the earth, that the only prince who ever voluntarily placed bounds to his own power,—DIED FOR IT ON THE SCAFFOLD, and ruined his people while he destroyed himself. He gave ear to those who told him of abuses; he wished to *ease* his people; he sought popularity; he allowed the liberty of the

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prefs, and would not restrain even its licentiousness; he cherished the arts, to produce a David, and nourished, in the bosom of protected science, a Condorcet*; he would not shed the blood of traitors, conspirators, and rebels†; he listened to those who petitioned for a REFORM.—We also have those who demand a REFORM,—and when the legislature of this kindom, unwarned by this great example, shall listen to the doctrines that have drenched France with blood, we also may see spectacles too horrid now to think of; did not the late tragedy tell us, that no iniquity is too black for republican reformation.

This damned event, deep written in the characters of hell, has thrown a stupor over mankind: when the princes and legislators of the world recover from it, the observation of Machia-

* That is to say, the virtuous meritorious character, of whom we have peers who have publicly declared themselves *proud of his correspondence*. Let those who would wish to know him well, read his character in *La Matbie Journal Physique*, and the memoirs of the assassination of the Duke de la Rochefoucauld.

† And this humanity called on his memory the abominably unfeeling remark, which I have somewhere read, in the register, I suppose, of some night cellar, that *the physical pain he suffered in his execution was less than the slow torments of La Fayette*. Did the innocent Louis declare that *insurrection*, by which they both fell, to be *the most sacred of duties*? And are the children of the author of that sentiment clinging to the knees of a father leading to execution? The more Jacobinism we read, the more amiable it appears.

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velli, will not probably be forgotten: *Perche con pochissimi essempli sarai più pietoso, che quelli li quali per troppa pietà lasciano seguire i disordini onde naschino occisioni o rapine.*

It is well enough amongst men who never see a remote cause, when an immediate one is before them, to attribute this deep stain in human annals, to the butchers who are in the Convention; in like manner the ambition of Cromwell was the direct cause of the death of Charles I.: but these are not the first causes; they are rather the natural result of preceding events. It is not Robespierre and Egalité that have murdered Louis, it was Neckar with his *double tiers*; it is PERSONAL REPRESENTATION to which this horrible crime, preceded (and which will be followed) by so many others, is alone to be attributed. And should ever similar deeds again blot the national character of this kingdom, it is not the wretches who shall form some distant convention of anarchy, to whom the mischief should be attributed, but to our REFORMERS; to our Jacobin advocates for *improving* our representation; for doing that here which has deluged France in her best blood. Such is personal representation; such is the sovereign will of a mob; such is the majesty of the people; such is liberty, when founded on Equality and Rights of Man! Representation destroys itself; and generates, with infallible cer-

tainty, an oligarchy of mobbish demagogues, till, of all other voices, that least heard is the real will of the people: 280 voices declare the will of 745 in the legislature; and 11,000 voices in Paris are the organ of 150,000 voters!!! Bad as you may make rotten boroughs, are they as bad as this?

Of what is the present Convention of France composed? Of the lowest, poorest, most profligate, and most worthless of the people—of the scum of gaols, of their galleys, and of our hulks—of robbers and cut throats, without character, without fortune, without a hope under any system but that of anarchy—and of persons of a description not quite so low, but of characters, if possible, more blasted than those of butchers or taylors can be. What is Condorcet, Paine, Brissot, Rabbeau!!! What are they but men who prove, that some education, some knowledge, some talents, are necessary to sink mankind into its lowest and basest state of depression and guilt? Who can doubt of our having men of all these descriptions in England? Some have been sedulous to register their names on the tablets of that Convention—Empty our gaols—stop the ships that are sailing to Botany Bay—and who can question that, with the assistance of our reforming societies, we could form a British Convention, that might rival in merit the Assembly at Paris? Men in sufficient numbers

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numbers might be found, and of sufficient poverty, who would consider a seat in a National Convention of England, with boundless power to rob and murder, as the consummation of human happiness. CAN SUCH MEN BE FRIENDS TO THE PRESENT WAR? No; assuredly. It blots their prospects—it brings perdition to their hopes. Powerfully as they are instigated to deprecate a war—just in that degree are all honest men, the friends of law and order, bound to bless the wisdom of government, that has awakened to the dangers that threatened us, and taken the effectual means of WAR to secure to us our houses, our properties and estates, our laws, our religion, and our lives. A war in such a cause, founded in such motives, was never before a question in Britain. Will you have a municipality in your hall, and a pike in your bosom, with what some men call peace? or will you keep French assassins at a distance, and English Jacobins amenable to English law, by a WAR?

To return from this digression—the absolute nonsense of all that Paine says on the distinct natures of a constitution and a government, applied not to a federation of independent republics as America, but confounded, as he confounds it with the new constitution of France, was gloriously exemplified in the National Assembly, (which was the *government*) destroying the constitution;

tution; demanding of the people (that is of anarchy) to make a new one. Here the fact clearly is, *that an equal representation, sitting in one house, and in a great city, had the power to destroy a constitution established and sworn to by all France*; and the conclusion is, that let the next constitution be what may, it will be equally in the power of the government of the day assembling at Paris, to destroy that also.

An argument I have heard much urged is this—that something should be granted to moderate men, in order to separate them from the *republican* party. It is urged that the obstinacy of the legislature granting nothing, drives moderate men to associate with others not equally moderate in their views; but if a temperate reform were to be effected, or even commenced by the legislature, all who are at present with reason discontented, would be detached from the reformers, and the violent party would sink for want of notice.

In replying to this common objection, I do not mean to assert, that all innovation should always be rejected; I would only bring to the recollection of moderate men, certain circumstances which it is fair to weigh.

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The clubs, associations, and societies, who assemble with views of enforcing reformation, on certain plans projected by various writers, some moderate, some violent, have published repeatedly to the world the principles on which they would found the national freedom, and the multifarious changes they would make in the constitution; these very generally go to great lengths. While imaginations are heated by the example of France; while the most unlimited panegyric is profusely lavished on the Revolution; while the demands made are of a nature that threaten the entire overthrow of our government; while these Rights of Man, which have deluged France in blood, are openly professed as leading principles in the improvements called for here, it may surely be admitted in candour, as a fair reply to the moderate,—that to give a little, when a great deal is demanded, does not seem the way to quiet clamour; and when, by a thousand publications and resolutions, it is declared, that PERSONAL REPRESENTATION is the panacea for all our evils (though under a hundred various names), and demanded even with threats and menaces, it must be palpable to every considerate man, that small concessions to satisfy the moderate would be lost in the agitation of the moment,—despised as the concessions of timidity, wrested from fear, not granted by conviction. They would be made a vantage

ground for new demands; and clamour, instead of being silenced, would vociferate with renewed vigour.

All demands, therefore, that come under the theory or practice of personal-representation, should be resisted on principle with firmness, and a determined resolution never to take that first step to anarchy, confusion, bloodshed, and Jacobinism, which, in one word, sums up all that is atrocious in political depravity. This ought to be considered as the only line of demarcation clearly defined, that separates moderation of sentiments from insanity of innovation.

"When the right," says Paine, "to make a constitution is established in a nation, there is no fear that it will be employed to its own injury. A nation can have no interest in being wrong." But here, as in every page of his work, the practice of France is the reply to the theory of his sedition. That kingdom *established* such right; and what was the consequence? Why it proved no more than the right to cut her own throat. It was employed to much more than her injury, for it was employed to her utter destruction. That a nation can have no interest in being wrong, is a truism; but in contradiction to her own interest, she chose never to be right. What is the force and

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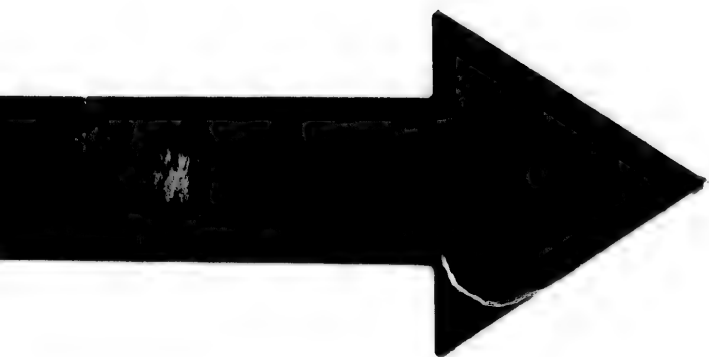
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and worth of such a writer's eternal strings of assertion, when brought to the test of French experiment!

The principle of our constitution is the representation of property; imperfect in theory, but efficiently in practice; by means of apparent defects, but which, perhaps, are disguised merits, the great mass of property, both landed, monied, and commercial, finds itself represented; and that the evils of such representation are trivial, will appear from the ease, happiness, and security of all the lower classes, hence possibly virtual representation takes place, even where the real seems most remote.

If virtual representation is good, would not real representation be better?—No, replies experiment; it has been tried in France, and failed entirely; real personal representation is not a people well governed, but the government of the people; that is to say, anarchy and ruin. If parliament acts from the immediate impulse of the people, and it can act no otherwise with personal representation, the wisdom of the community is governed by the folly of it. While experience gives the living and energetic sanction to this principle, in the clearest and most unquestioned prosperity that any nation ever yet enjoyed, would it not be insanity





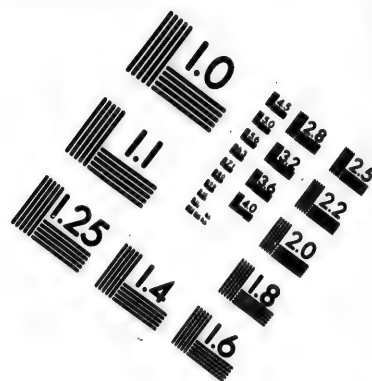
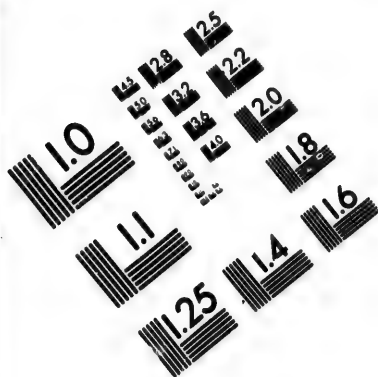
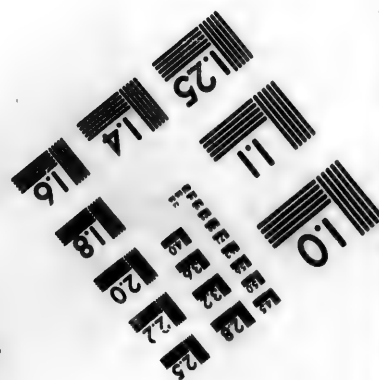
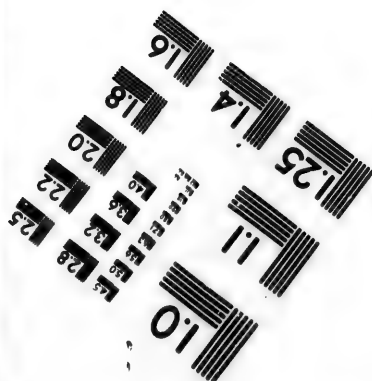
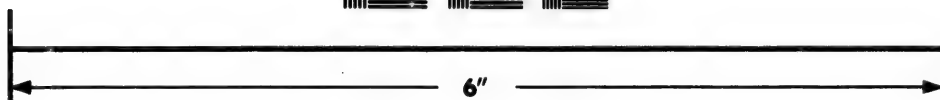
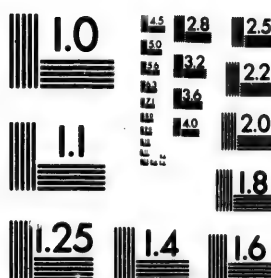


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to risk this fair inheritance, this rich possession, on the crude deductions of new theories; on suppositious improvement; ideal benefits, and speculative reformation? Yet this is pleaded for by the advocates for Rights of Man. On grounds of such pure theory, a prudent farmer would not change the culture of a turnip field; yet these reformers, on no better foundation, call for alterations in a government that has given prosperity to a great empire.

Nor let us forget that these men have been equal friends to the French Revolution from the beginning, and they are steadily so at this moment; under the Constituent Assembly they approved, and published panegyrics on the annihilation of orders: under the next assembly they rejoiced at the demolition of royalty; and under the Convention all the horrors we have seen are insufficient to remove their approbation. Does not this conduct prove clearly, that when these politicians tell us they mean and wish moderate and temperate reform only, they insult our understandings? If they really desired any thing short of the total overthrow of our government, would they continue to enlist, to speak, and to write, under Jacobin banners? Would they exalt the destruction of the old government of France, as the greatest event of history? Would they glory in

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French events, effected as they have been by pro-
scriptions and massacre? You want only tempe-
rate reform.—I will tell you what you want, by
the company you keep;—if you are a party in as-
sociations, you want THAT for which those associa-
tions combine:—if you call for personal repre-
sentation, you call for THAT which personal repre-
sentation has given to France;—if you demand a
popular Assembly, subjected to popular phrenzy,
you demand the effects which such an Assembly
produced with our neighbours. You would go
only certain lengths—but you herd with those, and
give them your countenance who you know would
push events much further; have we not, therefore,
reason for judging directly from your actions, that
you *mean* more than you think political to *avow*.

It is curious to remark the conduct of certain
men, calling themselves moderate, who make the
tour of reforming societies, but quit them when
they *go too far*. There are such now clamorous
amongst the *Friends of the People*, who have struck
their names out of the *Constitutional Society*, as they
found their views too bold: this is the exact mi-
niature of a Revolution; the first instigators want,
perhaps, a moderate reform of abuses, and when
their companions drive at more, they separate;
but such companions do not stop their pursuit for
want of moderate men, who, by their countenance,
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brought the ill-designing into consequence, and it is then no longer in their power to suppress them. Thus the *Constitutional Society*, though quitted by the respectable, were not therefore silent, but at the bar of the Convention of France, hail the coming Convention of England: these men will do the same with the *friends of the people*: when they have nursed up mischievous men into a society of importance, they will be driven out if they refuse to go all lengths, and will find that the only result, of their moderate views, has been to promote and bring into efficacy the immoderate designs of those who think our constitution the temple of Lagon, and that to level it in the dust is a duty, in order that out of its ruins may arise the "heavenly form" and "delightful vision" of a French Convention. What is the conclusion?—That the first lines of discontent are in fact the most dangerous; that moderate reform, or any reform at all, *on principle*, is a sure step to all that followed reform. France; jacobinism, anarchy, and blood.

If any attempts, at so perilous a season, to reform the constitution, must be attended with such unquestionable danger, reasoning as we may justly do on the experiment of France; it will follow, that **EVERY INTEREST** in this kingdom is bound to resist, with the utmost solicitude, such mischievous

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chievous projects, the execution of which, amongst our neighbours, has deluged a great kingdom with universal ruin.

THE LANDED INTEREST is immediately and most essentially concerned; for the poison of equality in principle, and in French practice, tends directly to their ruin: the fate of landlords, in France, is too well known to want repetition; their estates seized; their chateaus plundered and burnt; their wives and daughters violated; and themselves either murdered or driven into exile; and this to an almost incredible extent. I have seen details which shew, that the landed property of more than half the kingdom has changed hands. The farmers have not much more to boast of, for they have paid dearly for their exemption from tithes in the violent attacks made on the size of farms and consequent division; the hard silver which, under the *old* government, was the price of their products, is become paper depreciated to half its value under the *new*; and even this wretched substitute they are not allowed to receive at a fair market; their treatment in this respect has been already detailed: out-voted, and consequently cheated in taxation: at market plundered by the mob: at home plundered by the military. Are these facts to make our English yeomanry and farmers wish to try their skill at mending the constitution? Are they calculated

culated to give us any respect for clubs and societies, whose object is the reform of that constitution which has rendered our situation directly the reverse of France? Do such facts give us reason to love the men who want to convert your ploughshares into pikes, and your coulters into daggers? Who would recommend you to change your sickles for the sabres of a company of patriot contractors? Gentlemen who have shewn themselves exceedingly adroit in cutting down fields of French corn. I wish you to make experiments in husbandry, but do not let them be of this complexion: do not let other men, and especially reformers, make experiments on your property, your bread, and your blood; three objects upon which many experiments have been tried in France, and we have seen that the success has not been such as gives us reason to try our hands at the same work: for, in one word, their property is gone; for bread they have the bark of trees; and as to blood, it is the only manure the fields of France have seen, from the first moment she listened to reformers. Is she then to us an example or a warning?

Traders and manufacturers can presently convert their wealth into money, and fly with it on paper wings wherever property remains secure; but the farmer is chained to a spot, his property invested in the soil he cultivates;—he has no power

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power of movement, but must abide the beating of the storm, be it pitiless as it may.—To him, therefore, the new fangled doctrines of equality ought to appear in all their native deformity; for they are doctrines that tend directly to his destruction; and from whose pestilential influence he cannot, like others, fly.

THE MONIED INTEREST, in moments of convulsion, have some advantages from the more portable nature of their wealth, but the warning of France may instruct, that nothing can escape the depredations flowing from the Rights of Man. Their national debt, amounting to 300 millions, sterling, has been treated not altogether with the delicacy shewn to the public creditors of England, for every sort of bankruptcy, but a nominal and declared one has been committed; and the interest on funds and mortgages paid, has been in assignats: if a man sells stock, he receives assignats; and though assignats are portable, what is their value on the exchange of London, or the Stadt-house at Amsterdam*?—Of ninety millions sterling

* The astonishing and daily coinage of assignats, by the Convention, must have effects which they do not seem clearly to foresee; from their readiness to issue paper, it should seem that they expect a possible continuance of the same facility, but in this they will certainly find themselves deceived. The amount in circulation much exceeds what is known. The number of forgers

ling of former currency, eighteen-twentieths have disappeared. The monied men have, therefore, lost stock and cash; the want of credit has followed; so, without funds, credit, or cash, and nothing seen in the immense vacuity but assignats, the monied interest of France must flourish marvellously. Is there any thing in this picture that should make the monied interest of England fond of revolutions?

Unite these circumstances with the horrible deficiency of the present year's revenue; the expence

forgers of false assignats now in their gaols proves this fact; but the great deluge is not by men within their power. The Princes, the Duke of Brunswick, and all the enemies of France, in every place they came to, left in circulation immense quantities; and what is still worse, their own successes in Flanders, and on the Rhine, had the same effect; no town was taken that was not well provided: though depreciated, this currency made good plunder for soldiers, who were hardly at the trouble of plundering in order to procure it. This excessive introduction was probably the reason for the countrymen absolutely refusing to take them. Dans le Belgique, les habitants des campagnes ne veulent pas recevoir d'assignats; ce discredit vient de ce que les émigrés en ont répandu une multitude de faux. *Monit. Dec. 14.*—They have their own conventional forgeries as well as others, for it is a curious circumstance, that the new assignats are issued without being numbered, and consequently may be by *milliards* instead of millions: this has been asserted in the Convention, and yet uncontradicted. Of the same complexion is the fact, that in the *Moniteur* the National Gazette; the price of the louis d'or in assignats, has not been published for some months past, which was always regularly done before.—Debt reported by Chabot, *Monit. 3d March*, 8,634,893,980 liv.—Interest, 367,844,949 liv.—Arrears of taxes, according to Claviere, 647,827,896 liv.

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they are at in hard cash, for purchasing foreign corn, to prevent their starving; the immense efforts they must make for the next campaign; the growing habit of the people not to pay taxes; and the universal decline of both manufactures and commerce; it must then be apparent to every eye that their gasconading decree of war against the constitutions of all their neighbours, is an effort of despair. Should rebellions fail them—should they miss the safety which Paine bespoke for them, “when France shall be surrounded with Revolutions, she will be in peace and safety,” they will find internal ruin of every sort disseminating too fast to be supported:—the people will find themselves in a situation helpless, proportioned to their success; for their paper, on the frontier, is not of half the value it bears in the interior of the kingdom. This is their real source of weakness, and it is absolutely irremediable; nor will the farmers continue to cultivate the ground for more than the physical necessities of their families, if paid only in a currency continually depreciated;—annual famines ensue;—in a word, the seeds of ruin lie scattered so thickly, that the most careless attention must recognize them. The nation feeling severely that equality means but equal misery; and that the Rights of Man produce only the right to be starved, will revolt, and call in their lawful sovereign as the best and readiest mean of safety.

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Paine is fond of running parallels, and so are most men of genius; but he is rarely happy in them:—"The generality of the people in America," says he, "especially the poor, are more able to pay taxes than the generality of people either in France or England." And he unites with this, the "cruelty" of a civil list of a million sterling, which he compares with the civil list of America, which is only 300,000 dollars. One must search many writers with talents, to find one who can compress such multitudes of falsehoods and blunders into the same space with this captain-general of mountebanks.

The ability to pay taxes does not depend on a people being at their ease,—that is, having few or no indigent poor. This assertion will seem a paradox only to the ignorant. That ability depends on the quantity, number, and rapidity of *money exchanges*; in other words, on CONCENTRATED CIRCULATION. The ease, the plenty, and happiness of the people have nothing to do in this business; for give a man a thousand acres of rich land, which produces beef, mutton, pork, wheat, wool, hemp, flax, &c. to profusion; let the family that possesses it, live in the utmost conceivable plenty, there does not result from this outline the capability of paying one shilling of taxes. Even taxes on solid property, like land-taxes, must
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be paid by *cash in circulation*: land does not pay a land-tax, but *money*. It is not, therefore, the *ease* of the people that enables them to pay, but the *money* superfluity that goes beyond that ease. In the consumption of a thousand pound's-worth of products forming the ease, the physical "ability," mentioned by Paine, what is the taxable amount? Possibly not a penny beyond the consumption of foreign wine, coffee, spices, &c. I used the expression *concentrated* circulation; America, if she wanted heavy taxes, would feel what it means: let a settler in the woods, two hundred miles from a city, sell his hemp or his wool to a store-keeper for money, there is a step in circulation where the state might levy a tax; but in a wild country, it would cost ten times more to levy it, than the tax would be worth. We know what distilleries are in the Highlands of Scotland; the Americans have that tax also, but they can levy it only in peopled districts: nay, there are districts in America, where the land-tax will not pay for the collecting!! It would be easy to pursue these observations to demonstration; and to shew, that the reverse of his proposition is true, and that the people of England and of France (before the Revolution, for nothing since has circulated but blood and rapine) are infinitely more able to pay taxes than those of America, for this plain reason, that they have a circulation infinitely more rapid.

When I consider the boundless wealth of this kingdom; its enormous consumption; its rapid circulation of 40 millions sterling, in gold and silver, and of paper to an infinitely greater amount; its exportation and importation, which, if valued truly, would exceed 50 millions sterling; the facilities of movement, exchange, transfer, of life, if I may use the expression, arising from the size of our cities, and the mass of our circulation; I should think it a moderate calculation to say, that, in case of any unforeseen emergency of the state, that called for some great exertion, it would be easier to raise, by taxation, in Great Britain, five pounds a head on the people, than it would be to raise 5s. a head in America: for in taxation, speaking at large of a nation, the quantum *paid* is not so much the object to regard, as the quantum *left* after taxes are paid. Suppose the people of one country pay 20s. a head, and the people of another country 40s. (not very far from the fact of England and France)—what does this prove? Just nothing. What is left in their pockets after the tax is paid? There is the inquiry; and in the Englishman's pocket you would find a purse of guineas and shillings*; in the Frenchman's, the

* The mass of our taxes is not so great an evil as their inequality; the burthens paid by a country gentleman, of small estate, are hideous, and leave him, like the Frenchman, with empty pockets.

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maladie de la poche, vacuity. Perhaps the happiest and most enviable people in America, the *comfortable* freeholder, in the back country, is, of all the men in Europe or America, the one least able to pay taxes. What do I deduce from this? That the comparison of the English civil list of 898,468l.*, amounting to 1s. 7½d. a head, is not at all unreasonable, when compared with the American civil list of 300,000 dollars (66,000l.), or 5½d. a head. But no comparison can be drawn justly, between a new country that did not form itself and an old one that did, and now pays the expence of forming that new one. Let the American account be charged with the expence of the war of 1756, or one hundred millions, and then compare taxation.

THE COMMERCIAL INTEREST of France has been completely laid in the dust. Her colonies, by far the greatest source of her trade, have been totally ruined. Equality and the Rights of Man have, to the sugar of America, been as propitious as to the wheat of France. Assignats struck with a palsy all the imports of the kingdom, and her exports, after the destruction of St. Domingo, were a handful. The horrible convulsions in the great towns, drove the merchants and master manufacturers, with the remnant of

* Sir John Sinclair's History of the Public Revenue, vol. ii. p. 76.

their wealth, into other countries, or sunk them in ruin at home.

We have been told indeed, with some degree of confidence, that the French fabrics are not at present in such a state of depression as some have represented. As I have very late intelligence from that kingdom, and on which I can rely, I may venture to assert with confidence, and I could confirm it by referring to many representations made to government by the municipalities of the manufacturing towns, that every fabric wrought from foreign materials, such as the whole business of Lyons, and a considerable portion of the woollen fabrics, are in absolute ruin; the masters and undertakers, bankrupts or fled, and the workmen begging in the streets, subsisting by charity, or wandering vagabond banditti,—the *brigands* that infest the country, by endeavouring to wring from the peasantry a portion of that bread they are unable fairly to earn; such is the lot which the new doctrines of equality have produced for Lyons, the second city in France, as well as numerous other places that once were flourishing. The governing party in such towns have nothing to give the people, but the flattery of equal rights; they starve on equality, till the number in the same desperate situation becomes great enough for their *sacred duty* of insurrection; then they rise,

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knock their governors on the head, and are themselves *elected* into their places; but this cures the evil scarcely for one in a thousand; the mass remains still poor; and must necessarily remain so, for such convulsions do not re-establish manufactures: knocking brains out does not set looms a going; nor does the exercise of the pike in the body of a mayor and his aldermen, bring Italian silk to Lyons, or Spanish wool to Louviers.

In the manufacturing towns which work up native commodities, the misery is not equally great, because there is some employment that stirs; but let us examine a little more closely the nature of this circulation. I am informed, and common sense will tell one it must be so, that the only motive which induces master manufacturers to continue their business is that of *getting rid of assignats*; they sold their stock in trade when paper was a better commodity, and accumulating, by degrees, what grew every day worse and worse, alarm incited them to do any thing rather than keep in their possession such a depreciated currency; dreading the inevitable moment when it would be worth nothing, they feared to keep what a breath might dissipate; they regarded it as an object of terror, and employed their workmen merely to get rid of what they knew carried a value merely nominal; and paid readily what they kept insecurely.

There is a passage, in Swift's Draper's Letters, which accounts fully for gold and silver so absolutely disappearing in France; I change only *Wood's pence* for *assignats*.—"For my own part I am already resolved what to do; I have a pretty good shop of stuffs and silks, and instead of taking *assignats*, I intend to truck with my neighbours, the butcher, and baker, and brewer, and the rest, goods for goods; and the little gold and silver I have, I **WILL KEEP BY ME LIKE MY HEART'S BLOOD, TILL BETTER TIMES**, till I am just ready to starve, and then I will buy *assignats*."

Turn your eyes from France to view the commercial state of England. Contemplate the immense—language cannot swell beyond the magnitude of reality,—the gigantic fabric reared on the industry of this kingdom: throw into one vast amount the public funds,—the paper circulation of every species,—the gold and silver, whether money or plate,—the manufacturing establishments that have raised new cities, as it were, by enchantment,—the capitals invested in roads, canals, and other public works,—the shipping, magazines, and mercantile wealth of a thousand kinds, and spread throughout the globe. How would this enormous total, which, in England, has been nursed to maturity by the fond tenderness of parental protection—how would it support the storm which the Rights
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of Man have kindled in France? Mortal would be the blow. To touch on such a supposition is enough; every reader can picture the universal scene of ruin that would blot so fair a canvas. But how has this prodigious capital, rising much above five hundred millions sterling, been formed? BY THE SECURITY WHICH THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION GIVES TO PROPERTY: not by equality, personal representation, Rights of Man, Jacobinism, and the vile theories by which poor profligates, wanting to be rich rogues, become practical robbers. Such were not the paths of the commercial prosperity of Britain!

THE LABOURING INTEREST; the personal interest of the labouring poor has been attacked in an instance, the more remarkable as it was a ground of accusation against the old government. Those who recollect the complaints against it, on account of countrymen being enrolled for the militia, and consequently liable to be called into service, have probably read much, in the public prints, of the number of *volunteers*, which flock from all parts of France to the armies on the frontiers. Until these few days, I was ignorant and foolish enough to believe that these were *really* volunteers; but an English labourer, returning from a farm in France, to which I had sent him, has

has explained to me the nature of this voluntary service. All the men in the parish, able to serve, were enrolled, and then drew lots to see who should go to form the number demanded; and, though an Englishman, my informant himself drew. Such is the mode of calling forth VOLUNTEERS, and so grossly are we deceived by names, which under a semblance of freedom, cover the severest tyranny that can disgrace a people, and precisely in those articles, which, under the old government, were made the subject of the loudest complaint. When we shall read in future of the *eagerness* with which citizens fly to the frontiers, *l'empressement avec lequel tous les citoyens vont aux frontieres*, we shall know what it means. May not such wretches ask, "what inducement has the farmer, while following the plough, to lay aside his peaceful pursuits, and go to war with the farmer of another country *?"

At first sight it should appear that a Revolution in England, in favour of principles of equality, would be most favourable to the poor classes, the labouring part of the society,—and yet, perhaps, in fact, being still governed by the experiment of France, there is no class in the state, the great landed possessors alone excepted, to whom it would prove so completely mischievous. There is every

* Paine.

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reason to have confidence in the honesty, moral feelings, and good intentions of the great mass of our lower and poorer classes, and to be rationally certain, that in case of general confusion, like that which has ruined France; they would absolutely refuse to become cut throats, blood hounds, and assassins: the mass in France were honest also, but they were driven like sheep by forward determined wretches, who, getting together in arms, seized on the power which they pretended to assign to the people; plunder followed this, and the great body of the nation found, dreadfully to their cost, that they had only changed masters; but this change, from a king to bands of ruffians, brought with it fruits of fore digestion; money absolutely disappeared; the rich, who formerly gave employment, were hunted down and destroyed like wild beasts; the convulsions of the moment banished the rich merchants and manufacturers; EMPLOYMENT, which converted labour into bread, was dried up with the springs that fed it. Amidst the mockery of pay, if the poor workman cannot eat his assignats he starves—he has but one resource—he dips them in blood;—with pike in hand he attacks the corn destined to satisfy the hunger of others; and the tragedy so often acted in that miserable kingdom, is again performed till equality ends, as every where else, in equality of ruin. “ The manufacturers make nothing; nothing is bought; commerce is alive

alive only in soldiers. I see nothing in trade but our imprudence and our blood. Nothing will soon be seen in France but misery and paper *." This from the mouth of a Jacobin in the Convention ! Can any doubt remain † ?

Nov. 26, at the bar the deputation from Loire and Eure tell the Convention : *The laws are without energy, and without vigour. The price of bread renders it inaccessible to the poor. MISERY IS AT ITS HEIGHT. If the dearness continues, the greatest misfortunes may be expected.* With troops marching about the country to force the farmers to sell their corn *at half* the current price, and yet half paid with assignats, nay, who seize it at any price. —“ Illegal troops of men, in many departments,

* St. Just. Monit. Dec. 1.

† The price of wheat now, in many of the departments, is 4l. 10s. a quarter English; but as that price is paid in assignats, men not well informed may imagine that the poor being themselves paid in paper, might be proportionably able to buy; but the reverse is the case; the paper, while it has raised the price of bread, has destroyed both manufactures and commerce, and is now attacking agriculture itself; the people are absolutely without employment, and have no more the means to procure an assignat than a louis. This degree of misery is not yet of a year standing, for manufactures were active in some parts of France last spring. The affairs of that kingdom demand an attention that never sleeps, or we are sure to be deceived. The operation of the paper money has been very singular, for, to a certain period, it appeared to be beneficial; but *the line once passed*, every thing has been rapidly declining.

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seize the corn in the markets, without paying for it *." " At Louviers 5 or 6000 workmen arose to force the magistrates to go at their head, to seek corn in the granaries of the farmers. Last week, at Passy, they seized all that was in the market, while 600 others spread devastation through the forests †."

The state of the roads (under the old government the envy of Europe) is such as would alone, without other addition, very much impede the transport of corn, and add to the scarcity in many situations. I am informed, by a person who lately travelled across the kingdom, that no repairs whatever have been done for three years past, and that he was informed, on inquiry, in several districts, that the people absolutely refused to contribute either money or labour to mend them. The minister of the Interior, Jan. 6, complains to the Convention, that they are in a shocking state of ruin; *dans un etat de delabrement epouvantable*. In a state of anarchy, the object of roads may be thought small; but it shews, that in a point where the people themselves are so intimately concerned, government for every purpose of doing good is absolutely at an end, and that it remains for evil only. You abolish tithes, and feudal payments;

* The minister of the Interior to the Convention, Nov. 28. *Moniteur*.
† *Monit.* Jan. 9.

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the next step is, the people will not pay the land tax, and then will not repair the roads that are for their own use. Such is the state, and there are politicians in England who tell us, all will end well in France, as if it were possible to remedy such evils by new experiments. The absolute and unequivocal restoration of the old government, with terrors in its train, not the beneficence of Louis XVI. seems now to be the only remedy. IT WAS NOT THUS UNDER THE OLD GOVERNMENT; but they were not content. The next day the minister of the Interior writes to the Convention, complaining of the Commons of Paris, *in the midst of abundance we are ready to perish with famine. Such is the fruit of eternal declamation to beat the people. Administration is neglected: it is all a horrible disorder.* "Our food," says Saint Just, "has disappeared, in proportion as our liberty has extended*." There, in two words, is the evil and the cause. *The people triumph and suffer, say the Jacobins, in their address to their brother societies, during four years of misery, and four months of continual outrages †.*

The deputation of the department of Loire and Cher, at the bar of the Convention, Nov. 26, declare an insurrection of 25,000 men, on account of

* Monit. Dec. 1.

† *Lettres de Robespierre à ses Commettans*, No. 8. p. 386, 387.

the high price of corn.—They assert, however, that there is corn enough in the country for a year, but the operations of the people, occasion such distress, that a poor woman of the parish of l'Hovital, went three times to the market of Romorentin for corn, but not being able to get it, she went home, and, driven to excess of hunger, she killed her infant, for which she was since hanged *. This surely merits some attention from the labouring poor,—from these classes of society, amongst whom our Jacobin reformers distribute their poison of equality and Rights of Man. These rights have produced delicious fruits in France, where the poor are driven to the gallows for KILLING THEIR OWN CHILDREN, TO PREVENT THEIR DYING OF FAMINE, *with corn enough in the country!!!* “By means of revolutions,” says Paine, “civilization will be left to the enjoyment of that abundance, of which it is now deprived.”—The abundance produced by revolutions is a text for Frenchmen to preach on. And it is for these rights, for such equality, for this fine system of French philosophy and NEW LIGHTS; this moon-shine of theoretical benefit, that our poor are to give up all their present comforts! To change what Old England gives them, whether good or bad, for *rights* that drive them, by famine, to kill their own children, amidst Jacobin plenty; and then be

* Monit. Nov. 27.

hanged

hanged by that law which would have suffered them to die of hunger! Oh, John Bull! it is not thus that thy government treats wild beasts.—Thou mayest be shut up in the tower, John, but thou wilt not be made to eat thy children! “*We see every day in the streets, and even at the doors of the sanctuary of the laws, wretches who want both bread * and cloathing.*” —“Our situation is such,” says a member of the Convention, “that tyr-nny will spring with victory and vengeance from popular commotions; and if the Rights of Man shall continue to exist, they will be written with the blood of the people on the tomb of liberty. The asylum of our farmers will be violated; the hope of future harvests destroyed; and our nation become the jest of Europe †.” *This city, illustrious, but miserable*, said the mayor of Paris, at the bar of the Convention, Jan. 3d. *Oh! were the good citizens to rally, we should see conspirators repulsed in darkness, as on the 10th of August.* Thus calling for new revolts—for new massacres.—The Rights of Man are WRITTEN IN THEIR BLOOD! This, the present language of Frenchmen, even in the National Convention. Here is experience of what those blessed rights are which our English reformers are so desirous of establishing in this kingdom, as the best boon of heaven!

* Monit. Dec. 11. *Manuel.*

† Saint Just, Mon. Dec. 1.

To contrast this with the situation of the working poor, in the manufacturing towns of England, would be an insult to your understandings. You know, and, what is much better, you feel, that industry here meets its reward; that you are paid in hard cash every Saturday night; that you have something better, for your Sunday dinner, than an assignat; that a warm house covers you better than a branch of the tree of liberty; that a good coat, or stout pair of shoes, would be ill exchanged for a three coloured cockade; and, lastly, that whatever evil you have to complain of would be very ill remedied by any measures that tended sooner or later to change your beef and pudding for frogs and soup meagre; your coal fires for the pillaged sticks of a national forest; your shuttles for a hatchet; or your hammer for a pike; and the shillings and guineas of Old England for the paper assignats of Jacobin philosophers.

Before I finish the detail of that unhappy and ruined country, it will not be unamusing to contrast the *regal evils* of France with the *republican cures*.

Land taxes, the *evil*;—*cure*—seizing the land that paid them.

Feudal quit-rents, paid by the estate of the people, the *grievance*;—*remedy*—seizing the estate itself of the nobility and clergy.

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A deficit of fifty-six millions in the revenue, the *misfortune*;—*covered*—by a new deficit of three hundred millions.

Ten millions of royal paper, the *complaint*;—three thousand millions of assignats—the *cure*.

A national debt of 300 millions, the *malady*;—one of 9000 millions, the *remedy*.

Marie Antonietta *condemned* for the follies of a necklace.—Mademoiselle Theroigne *applauded* for leading prisoners to slaughter.

The arbitrary government of Louis XVI.—*changed*—for the despotism of Marat.

Drawing men for the militia, the *crudelty*;—forcing them into volunteer corps, the *favour*.

Lawyers and suits, the *misfortune*—*cure*—the summary jurisdiction of the lanthorn.

Twenty-five millions, the expence of one king, the *burthen*;—one hundred and fifty millions, the charge of seven hundred kings, the *ease*.

Seven prisoners in the Bastile, the *grievance*;—seven thousand in the municipal dungeons, the *cure*.

Trial by jury, *instituted*;—and 1200 throats cut in one night, in trial by pike.

Militia.

Militia.

IN the preceding pages I have said little of innovation : to declare against any measure, because an innovation, is a conduct worthy of children : there are, in every period, most valuable innovations ; Mr. Grenville's bill for trying contested elections was an innovation ; the *habeas corpus* was an innovation ; the House of Commons itself was an innovation. The question now is not general ; it is not for or against all innovation ; but what the nature of the innovation shall be ? There are some unquestionably wanted ;—while the spirit of equality is abroad—while all property—while life itself is menaced—can it remain a doubt what those innovations should be ? Exists there a man of property stupid enough to question whether the innovations of this period should not be directed to its security ? Whether, instead of bringing forward the many-headed monster into clubs of riot *,

* It is scarce worth a note, to obviate the palpable objection, that clubs have met without riot, and associations assembled without confusion :—so they did once in France, but what did they end in ? The moderate well-meaning men instituted some of those clubs, and saw themselves pushed out or trampled down, by new comers, who had nothing of moderation in their views. It will be so in all associations, into which men without property are admitted ; they must always be most numerous, and the most violent propositions ever most to their taste : they think that they have nothing to lose—there is the pivot on which such meetings turn, from perhaps original good intentions to ultimate destruction.

and affociations of confusion?—whether instead of nursing a spirit, and cherishing a principle that has laid France in the dust, we ought not to meditate innovations, that shall provide a mound against the billows when they shall flow; a shelter against the storm when the hurricane shall come. The innovation we want, and ought with one voice to call for, is a **MILITIA, RANK AND FILE, OF PROPERTY.**

Popular tyranny is a catching phrenzy, that will surely spread, if effective measures be not taken in time to prevent it. Every country in Europe depends, in the last resort, on a soldiery taken from the dregs of the people, whose imaginary interest is to join insurgents of whatever complexion. Such a reliance is, to the plainest apprehension, preposterous, and must, in the nature of things, fail in the long run. While danger, too manifest to question, and too formidable to palliate, presents itself on every side, nothing but infatuation can prevent some decisive and efficient measure from being embraced; some system of defence and security to property.

Were such a militia established, property would be secure; and those who possess it might view, with a more calm patience, the attacks, whether insidious or open, of men who, deriving nothing
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from the arts of peace and tranquility, seek public confusion, and to kindle the storm on which to mount by the fall and ruin of others.

But, after all that can be said, this idea of the division of property is so sweet a medicine to the great mass of mankind, that it will find enthusiastic followers in every country, and no where more than in the ranks of an army; hence the necessity of property securing itself, by being armed in a militia. A regiment of a thousand cavalry in every county of moderate extent, just disciplined enough to obey orders and keep their ranks, might be enrolled and assembled in companies three days in every year, and in regiments once in seven, at a very moderate expence to the public: such an establishment would give certain and permanent security against the mischievous example of France, and the equally mischievous propagation of principles in England, which tend to the same anarchy, civil war, and bloodshed, that has reduced our neighbour to her present desperate situation.

It has been said, that such a militia is impracticable; I will not reason on a case absolutely new, but we may venture to assert, that a law which legalizes and regulates the mode in which all the land proprietors in the kingdom, who do not desire the overthrow of the constitution, under the

pretence of its improvement, may instantly assemble, armed, in troops and regiments, ready to oppose the friends of anarchy; I say that a law which prepares the means of security and *defence*, while the rage of *attack* unites and electrifies the enemies of peace and order, must be good, and may be essential to the salvation of the community. All reference to former militia laws is beside the question—it was not of capital consequence whether executed or not, but the present moment is perilous, the danger is too imminent to be trifled with; while anarchy is at our doors, determined measures can alone preserve us.

Associations.

NEXT to the establishment of such a militia, the present spirit of association amongst the friends of the constitution, is a noble and genuine effort truly worthy of Britons. There is no real friend to his country, that does not rejoice to see this electric stroke of true patriotism spread with vital energy through the empire: it carries confusion to Jacobinism; it gives confidence in a just cause, and security to every generous bosom. Rapidly as the effort has shot, with genial influence through our counties, it could not be expected that the views would be uniformly directed to the same determinate objects. In a little time the scope and meaning

meaning will be well impressed, and then it will doubtless be found necessary to fix on places of rendezvous, to which honest men may resort when the wicked are abroad. The national spirit is at last roused; it has seen long enough the desperate and abominable associations of those who *do* wish, and did openly demand the overthrow of our excellent constitution, under pretences of Jacobin reformation: we have seen the danger—we have been shocked at the insolent threats of “invincible mobs,” we have sought the right means of safety; with a vigour of defence equal to the malignity of attack, a great nation will prove that she is not to be insulted with impunity. Had such associations existed in France, or any thing tending to them at the early stage of the Revolution, all the horrors that flowed from it might have been prevented; but the higher orders of society knew not their danger.—Here the case is directly contrary.—We are instructed by their calamitous experience—and of all effective means to be ready to meet a storm, this of association is (next to a militia of property) the most direct.

It may be said with truth, that a moment never yet occurred, which demanded equally the united, firm, and determined assistance—the heart and hand of men, friends of peace, to prevent, while yet it is possible to prevent, the horrors that so

lately awaited us. It is a moment that ought to bring political agitation to every bosom.—The question concerns not empires, kings, and ministers alone—it comes borne to our fortunes, our houses, our families. Will you, by the nerve and vigour of your measures, by the broad basis of universal property, on which you build the associations, by the prudence of the resolutions, and the energy of their execution, will you avoid the miseries of France? Listen not to the insidious pretences of Jacobin reformers—there is no medium in moments like these.—With the example of France in full display, propositions of reform, which in that kingdom produced conflagration and massacre, will, in this, have the effect of putting the nation on its guard against men, who so openly profess a readiness to stake all we enjoy, on the desperate throw of a new Revolution. This is the question that ought to collect the enemies of Jacobinism, and which ought to have a *seasonable influence on all the orders of Society, by which they may know and learn that we shall ever rally round the constitution**, uncontaminated by reforms, or the *tree of liberty*, the true symbol of Jacobin confusion. The danger has lessened since government has awakened to the nature of the present crisis, and since the admirable spirit of the people has manifested itself, the enemies of

* Mr. Fox's Speech to the Whig Club.—RIDGWAY'S.

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the public peace will not dare now to profess those Jacobin tenets, which, till lately, met us in such a multitude of shapes: they will put on the garb of more moderate and more temperate measures—they will now appear merely in the character of reformers—a character more dangerous, perhaps, because more masked and insidious: not less pointed in effect to equality and sedition; for these men know sufficiently, by the great experiment of France, that an equal personal representation of the people would infallibly produce here, as it did there, the absolute ruin of all legal authorities. This character of a reformer ought, therefore, to be an object of as much jealousy and distrust, as that of a professed Jacobin; and the associations spreading so laudably through the kingdom, should be on their guard equally against them and their doctrines. The prosperity of England, as neutral, is an eye-sore to the Jacobins, and, as an enemy, an object of terror. The question, then, is the means these cunning leaders are taking to spread the same confusion through this country, that has ruined theirs; most assuredly they will not open shops, and write JACOBIN over the doors—No; they know their business better—they find materials much more to their purpose; they find half their work done to their hands by our *Opposition-men*, and our *reformers* of the constitution. Seeing that the *result* of the labours of such men

answers

answers exactly their own *views*, they chime in, and cry reform! with a more energetic vociferation than ever they did *a la lanterne* in France. Their views, and this union of the Jacobin destroyers with the English reformers, ought to open the eyes of honest men, and make them, one and all, unite in the firmest associations. Not in faint declarations of loyalty*, that mean any thing

* In great numbers of the associations, there seems to have been a marked attention in drawing up their declarations of loyalty and veneration for the constitution, either to use phrases of equivocal meaning, or that might be palatable to reformers, as if it were a wish to include all descriptions of men, whatever their political sentiments: if such management had been carried a little further, declarations would have been produced, which direct Jacobins would have signed; but the original intention was wrong, and tended strongly to weaken the force and vigour of association. In the rational terror of a perilous moment, when struck with a common sensation of common danger, men fly to association, to secure themselves against the attacks of men already associated to destroy them: at such an instant, what can be so futile, what can be such imbecility, as to seek, by an ill-timed complaisance or candour, so to express their feelings, that associators of a direct contrary complexion, men who professedly seek to change the constitution on French principles (for there has not been a single proposition of reform that is not on those principles), that such men may be induced hypocritically to unite with you? The weakness of such a proceeding is inexcusable. On the contrary, all these declarations ought to have been so framed, as expressly and purposely to exclude a union with men so dangerous, as those who would not feel a horror at the idea of tampering with the constitution, at such a season as this:—by such an exclusion, it would be found, that, however numerous the reformers were before the

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20th of August, that at present not one man in a thousand would listen, with patience, to hear the word Reform seriously pronounced; nor fail to deprecate the idea, as pregnant with national ruin.

There is one object in associations which has not been thought of, but which would, perhaps, be as useful and effective as any other, and that is, for associators to resolve against dealing with any sort of Jacobin tradesmen: if the atrocity of attempts to alter a constitution, which so effectually protects property, as that of England does, on comparison with any other that Europe sees, be well considered, the supineness of mankind, in giving encouragement to those whose utmost efforts are aimed at its destruction, will surely appear the most marvellous stupidity. Who, acquainted with the *complexions* of men, in any town in England, does not sometimes hear the wealth of the disaffected made a boast of? If you name the danger of the political principles of certain men to property—your hear it exclaimed, *How? Do you consider the wealth of such and such persons? Are they not rich? Have they not a stake?* Yes; they have a stake; commonly as moveable as their persons, and therefore the readiness with which they hazard public confusion. But whence this boast of property? Because, probably, the landed-men in their vicinity, and the monied-men of other principles, have, with this gross blindness, which I at present allude to, been for years in the habit of assisting such disaffected republican Jacobin reformers, to accumulate that wealth which is now ready to be employed in their own destruction: they have been paying their incomes into the hands of men who are ready to convert the interest they make upon it to the establishment of a Convention in England, to consist of brother citizens of equality; to subscribe money, food, cloaths, and arms for the assassins and regicides of France, to enable them, by success at home, to subdue the *vices of the British constitution, by a radical reform.*

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power to the people:—Here lies our danger in the present moment; it is not the rank Jacobin, with bare and bloody arms, pike in hand, and ready for your throat; it is his gentleman usher, your modest reformer, who, meaning a great deal, asks a little, and knows how to make that little much. But be not so cajoled—resist ALL CHANGES in that constitution, which gives you the means of wealth, and protects you in the enjoyment. Come to resolutions declaratory of the abhorrence of changes; and of every proposition for them that does not originate in the legislature; and petition parliament to render illegal all meetings and clubs, whose object is to make experiments on British happiness; to discover rights better than those of an Englishman; to change your laws, religion, and government; and give you, in lieu of them, the NEW LIGHTS OF FRENCH PHILOSOPHY.

If any man doubts whether I have reason for these assertions, let him consider the addresses that have been presented to the National Convention

form. This supine inattention, which turns a man's money to his own destruction, is highly reprehensible. Let those who are real friends to the constitution, expend their income with men whose principles are known—and not become, unthinkingly, promoters of sedition, and encouragers of republicanism. Go amongst sectaries of various denominations, political and religious, and examine if the individuals are not attentive to this point.

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here follow a few extracts:

The Friends of the People and Constitutional Society of Newington*, thus address the Convention:—*It is with the most profound sensibility that we behold the success of your arms, in your undertaking to deliver from slavery and deception, the brave nations which border your frontiers: how holy is the humanity which prompts you to break their chains.*

Signed, J. F. SKIPPER.
F. PEACOCK.

The Revolution Society of London.—*Above all we rejoice in the Revolution of the 10th of August, so necessary to secure to you the advantages which the former had taught you to expect. We feel an agreeable sensation, that the right of insurrection has been so successfully exercised.*

Signed, J. TOWERS.
— COOPER.

The Friends of Liberty and Equality at Belfast.
—*For the glory of humanity, may your declaration of rights be every where put in practice.*

* Legacies left by the late Dr. Price, for the good of his country;—perhaps the *worst citizen*, speaking politically, that has lived in it of late years; but there are doubtless nobles that can boast of his friendship.

The

The volunteers of Belfast.—*The successes of the French secure liberty to the neighbouring nations.*

The united Societies of London.—*An oppressed part of mankind, forgetting their own evils, are sensible only of yours; and beholding the present events, with a disturbed eye, address their most fervent prayers to the God of the universe, that he may be favourable to your cause, with which theirs is so intimately connected. Degraded by an oppressive system of inquisition, the invincible, but continual encroachments of which quickly deprived the nation of its boasted liberty, and reduced it almost to that abject state of slavery from which you have so gloriously emancipated yourselves. FIVE THOUSAND English citizens, fired with indignation, have the courage to step forward to rescue their country from that opprobrium which has been thrown upon it by the base conduct of those who are invested with power. Frenchmen, our number will appear very small, when compared with the rest of the nation; but know, that it increases every day; and if the terrible and continually elevated arm of authority overawes the timid,—if falsehoods, every moment dispersed with so much industry, mislead the credulous,—and if the public intimacy of the court with Frenchmen, avowed traitors to their country, hurry away the ambitious and unthinking, we can, with confidence, assure you, Freeman and Friends, that knowledge makes a rapid progress*

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progress among us. You are already free, but Britons
are preparing to be so.

Signed,

M. MARGAROT.
T. HARDY.

Constitutional Society of London.—Innumerable
societies of the same sort are forming in every part of
England. After the example given by France, Re-
volutions will become easy; reason is about to make a
rapid progress, and it would not be extraordinary if,
in a much less space of time than can be imagined,
the French should send addresses of congratulation to
a National Convention of England.—Other nations
will soon follow your steps in this career of improve-
ment; and, rising from their lethargy, will arm them-
selves for the purpose of claiming the Rights of Man.

Signed,

SEMPILL.
D. ADAMS.
JOEL BARLOW.
J. FROST*.

The President's answer was a real declaration of
war against this kingdom.—The shades of Penn, of
Hampden, and of Sydney, hover over your heads;
and the moment, without doubt, approaches, in which
the French will bring congratulations to the National
Convention of Great Britain.

* Presented the 28th of November; and therefore approbation
direct of the 2d of September.

OF

Of the same complexion was the declaration, December 15th, of the Convention.—*That it will treat as enemies, the people who, refusing or renouncing liberty and equality, are desirous of preserving their prince and privileged casts, or of entering into an accommodation with them.*

Let those men (not Jacobins) who condemn, or who think it might have been avoided, seriously consider these extracts of the direct communication of English republicans with French cut throats. Can any person, not absolutely bereft of reason, conceive it possible that such men, thus machinating the destruction of our constitution, could continue their connection with the French Convention, which peace gave a boundless power of doing, without our running the most imminent hazard of every thing that government and law secure to us—that is to say, life and property.

The "*Proceedings of the Association of the Friends of the Constitution.*" Dublin. The Duke of Leinster!! in the chair," is a publication that deserves notice; because it proves, too clearly to be doubted, that our dangers are not at an end. Jacobinism hardly sleeps, in spite of all our associations; the enemies of law and of order never relax their efforts; Ireland is their favourite ground; and should these new principles of equality, the

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new French "lights," be there established, it will not be long before they are raging in our own vitals. These "friends" call on the people to "SUBDUE the corruption," "the infamy," "the foulest acts under the foulest names," which form the "regular system of government," by "a RADICAL REFORM;" by a body of "representatives, an integral and essential part of the constitution, derived from the people by GENERAL election." —The English language could scarcely, in an equal number of words, paint in stronger terms the fire-brands of sedition. To call on the people not to crave, or pray, or petition, but to SUBDUE the errors of government,—to SUBDUE them by a RADICAL reform, and GENERAL representation, is, in other words, to demand a Convention, the King at Tyburn, the Lords annihilated, and property the reward of new Roberespieres, Brissots, and Marats. But these expressions are too remarkable to be accidental; they coincide too exactly with the threats of the Jacobins in France, to allow us, for one moment, to believe that there is not a clear intelligence and union between them.

The minister of the marine, to the friends of liberty and equality in the maritime cities: "Will the ENGLISH REPUBLICANS SUFFER the King and his Parliament to make war? Already these free men testify their discontent and their repugnance

to carry arms against their French brothers. Well; we will fly to THEIR ASSISTANCE; we will invade that isle, and send 50,000 caps of liberty to plant the SACRED TREE, and to offer our open arms to OUR REPUBLICAN BROTHERS, to PURIFY English liberty, and REFORM the vices of the government." Here the Jacobins threaten *to purify our liberty, in conjunction with English republicans, and to reform our vices with 50,000 bayonets.* What is this but to *subdue us by a radical reform!!!* If any doubt could remain of the tendency of the operations of our reformers, surely such declarations are sufficient to remove them. To open our eyes to the horrible situation we should be in, if our legislature were absurd enough to listen to such incendiaries; or weak enough not to take effective measures to controul their treasonable practices. This is the *glorious conquest of reform, gained by the Irish people over the British ministry**. Our Jacobin reformers never speak of liberty, but it suggests ideas of conquest on one hand, and of subjection on the other. We are to be CONQUERED by reform, and SUBDUED to equality!

It has been said, even in Parliament, since government was sufficiently alarmed to call out the militia, and put the nation on her guard, that the King's Ministers ought to be impeached for

* Declaration of the Friends of the Liberty of the Press, p. 14.

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their conduct. Can any one doubt whether the men who sent these infamous deputations, and the men who composed them, would not avow directly the same opinion? But let the people at large know, by these abominable facts, the unquestionable reality of their danger. Let them here discover—their intellects must be weak indeed, if they cannot discover, in this deputation, what those men mean who drink equal liberty to all mankind—**NATIONAL CONVENTIONS EQUALLY EVERY WHERE!!** is the sentiment of their bosoms, and would have been sung about the streets, had government slept six weeks longer. Who can read without horror the following Address to the Volunteer Corps of Ireland, from an Irish society of the same complexion, so lately as Dec. 20. “Citizen soldiers to arms. When your country has been declared in danger, we conjure you by your glory to stand to your arms, and in spite of a police, in spite of a fencible militia, to maintain good order: it is only by military array that you can obtain the speedy resurrection of liberty and equality.” Here is abundant proof that we are far distant from entire safety; and that the least relaxation in that associated preparation, which is now our only salvation, would give new animation to these societies of desperate men with desperate views; to these enemies of government, of order, and of property. *Had Dumourier, says*

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Roberfpiere, March 10, *entered Holland three months ago, as he demanded, the Revolution would, by this time, have been made in England.* Yet have we men on the benches of Parliament who assert, that all our dangers were imaginary. The Jacobin leaders know better, and declare it.

Our enemies never rest,—in peace they celebrated the victories of France; now they view, with horror, the probable successes of England—with crocodile lamentations, and an affectation of regret, they can whine over the mischiefs they have spent their lives in generating; can come forward, in the moment of hostility, in the true garb of the republican Price, strenuous to exhilarate the national foe, and to depress the national energy, by representing that war as *odious and detestable* which the PEOPLE OF ENGLAND hail as JUST AND NECESSARY; croaking over the distempers of a jaundiced imagination; stirring up, Medea like, the cauldron of their own incantations, *popular effervescence,—the fermenting spirit of discontent,—tendency to violent change,—the annihilation of the constitution, by inveterate abuses,—an abused people, sick of the war of Kings* *.

While the spirit of the people is alert and animated with due zeal in defence of their lives and

* Letter to the Rt. Hon. William Pitt.

properties,

properties, both may be safe: but this exertion is not likely to be durable; and should that languor and indolence, the children of a foolish security, once more slacken the tension which results from the present impression, the courage of our enemies will revive; and those execrable societies, whose aim is plunder, and the means confusion, will resume the same pernicious activity in mischief that has effected the ruin of France, and had brought England almost to the brink of the same precipice down which her neighbour has been hurled. To guard against a neglect so fatal, becomes the first and greatest duty of government. It is firmness, energy, and vigour, against our domestic foes that can alone preserve the constitution uncontaminated by Jacobin reform; moderation, lenity, and the mild virtues of one man, have deluged France in blood; such are not weapons with which to combat in an hour like this: while the lamp-post, or the pike, is the imprimatur on the press in France; while suspicion fills the prisons, and massacre is the gaol delivery—if the legislature of England does not take effective precautions, but trusts too much to private efforts, we may, in the event, amidst confusion and terror, have reason to regret a want of policy, which an example so pregnant ought to have inspired.

A great lawyer says, that on the subject of associations, *the statutes and precedents of law are silent;*

but that they are *doubtful in law, unconstitutional in principle, and wholly unnecessary* *. To declare at the opening of his speech, that the associations were unnecessary, was completely begging the only material question between him the orator, and the people of England, who thought and felt them to be necessary:—He treats the subject in the direct line of legal inquiry, never for a moment as a politician, the only fair light to view a question in, upon which *law* and *precedent* are silent.

What then is the pivot upon which the question turns? Most clearly the political necessity. The kingdom swarmed with Jacobin and republican associations, in direct correspondence with the National Convention, for the *AVOWED* purpose of establishing liberty, equality, and a Convention in England: astonished at the daring attempt, and the rapidity with which the mischief spread, government stood aghast with horror—but where law and precedent were silent (I thank the gentleman for an admission, which completely cuts the throat of his argument)—it became ministers to be silent also. With the crown thus constitutionally inactive, the people saw their danger; they felt a great state necessity;—by association destruction was coming with gigantic strides—and by associa-

* *Declaration of the Friends of the Liberty of the Press*, p. 4.

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tion they repelled it. Was the constitution, the freedom, the property of England to be swept away in a whirlwind of republicanism, while lawyers were conning the *analogies of accusation**, and the *anomalies of justice*†? No:—a better spirit animated the bosoms of Englishmen; and all that is calm in the present security of good men—all that is venomous in the disappointment of bad ones—prove that the step was political, just, and necessary.

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What is the great objection? That the associations subscribed money for bringing the publishers of libellous and seditious writings to justice—admitting, on comparison, at the same time, the propriety of similar associations against swindlers and poachers, *because they are bottomed on crimes which are injurious to individuals as such*. It seems very whimsical to approve of associating for avenging a crime, which must in its nature be practised on an individual, and for whose protection the law is in daily practice fully competent to protect him; but wrong to associate for the punishment of a crime *not* levelled at an individual, but at *society in the mass*, and for the punishment of which the law was *NOT* in the practice either of punishing or preventing. In other words, that

* P. 4.

† P. 6.

men should associate for cases to which they are individually competent; and that they should not associate for cases to which they can be competent only by means of association. They should associate to transport a swindler, or fine a poacher, because those crimes are in the habit of being duly punished; but they should not associate against libels on the constitution, and calls to sedition, because these are in the habit of being distributed without punishment!

But while associations, with subscriptions for punishing libels, are thus branded, by our eloquent lawyer, as unconstitutional; associations, with subscriptions for *promoting the liberty of the press*, are declared to be perfectly constitutional*. The former are mischievous, because a court of justice might be *infected by a general prejudice*†. But might it not be asked, if such a court could not be equally *infected* by the prejudices of a Jacobin association? And if, *when subjects persecute one another by combination, they may not combine for their common defence*?‡ To PROMOTE the liberty of the press! Such an object is really curious at this time of day! The press is not free enough; it is too modest, and timid, and blushing, and wants to be encouraged, and countenanced, and protected: the

* P. 91.

† P. 7.

‡ P. 11.

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eloquent lawyer is kind enough to take this coy virgin by the hand, and persuade her to assume a proper assurance on coming into company. *We will, says he, maintain and assert the right of the people to point out the defects and corruptions of the constitution**; the press has not been free enough in doing this, and it therefore wants the assistance of this egregious association *to promote its liberty*. Strip the object of the garb which legal cunning and eloquent sophistry know so well how to arrange, and the plain unvarnished proposition is proper only to be laughed at; and, without any doubt, has been the butt of private ridicule among these wits who assemble in public in all the dignity of rueful visage. There is indeed reason why they should range with knights of the woeful countenance, they are not yet honoured with THOSE STATIONS OF EMINENCY †, which their leader on that day, by a lapse of the tongue, promised them as their due. The expression was remarkable, and shewed, with sufficient clearness, that there are views, certainly better and more worthy views, than opening a shop for constitutional corruptions, and for impunity in the dispensation of Jacobin remedies—for bringing into play the *divine energy of Englishmen*, in opposition to the forms of the consti-

* P. 9.

† P. 14.—The room understood the expression in its palpable meaning, as I do, and commented on it accordingly.

*tution**, that they may have *virtue to practise* † the doctrines which associations regard as seditious:— for a lawyer of great eminence in his profession to quit the field of legal inquiry for so bold a recommendation as this, is coming very near indeed to the *practical* doctrine of the pike and the lanthorn; in perfect analogy with the *glorious conquests* ‡ of Irish Jacobins, *subduing* the vices of our constitution with the *divine energy* of a *radical reform*.

But neither government nor the public ought to be driven from their purpose by the answer not uncommonly heard, which accuses the associators of going to the contrary extreme, and endangering the liberty of the people by professions of loyalty; this accusation may be considered as the last effort of disappointed sedition: the men who feel with the deepest chagrin the security such associations give to the constitution, as at present established, have nothing left during the vigour now exerted, but to retort accusations—and to tell us, that we mean, or act as if we meant, to render the King absolute: but such assertions scarcely merit attention: those men, if there are such, who wished before to change our government to a despotism, certainly wish it now; but that associations directly declaring a determination to maintain the

* P. 16.

† P. 8.

‡ P. 14.

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constitution *as it is*—free as it is now—mean really an intention to overturn it, is too preposterous to be credited—and worthy of the reforming quarter only from which it proceeds.

But neither a militia, association, nor any other measure to be devised would yield security were the licentiousness (not the liberty) of the press to be permitted to so shameful and destructive a length, as we have of late years experienced in England. It will probably be found after this period that no constitution, whether good or bad, can possibly exist against a licentious press. The old government of France was ruined unquestionably by inattention to this engine: the new tyranny established there is well aware of that momentous truth, and hath accordingly converted it, like the lanthorn into an engine of government. Where the licentiousness of the press is in any degree allowed, the general instruction of the lower classes must become the seed of revolt, and it is for this reason that the friends of reform, and zealous admirers of French equality, are strenuous for Sunday and charity schools.

The gentlemen who consider Paine as a *conspicuous friend of mankind, and an admirable writer**,

* Mr. Cooper's Reply to Mr. Burke's Invektive, p. 75.

would

would have a system of national education established, in which every person may become informed what are the *rights of a citizen**; what *privileges* they are *deprived of*†, and how to bring *capabilities into action* by a *glorious career of improvement*. The French have been wonderfully well instructed in all this; they have indeed brought their capabilities into action; they have not been wanting in *leisure, unremittingly employed, or in best endeavours exerted to hasten*‡ improvement. Since associations are found to distribute treason and sedition, to teach the exertion of capabilities, and to point out the glorious career of France as an object of imitation for England—the poison thus expanded, does not render the vehicle more respectable. I do not find on my farm, in the village, or its vicinity, that those are the best ploughmen and carters who are the deepest adepts in the Rights of Man. If there must be hewers of wood and drawers of water, why preach equality? Will not French horrors tell us, that to teach, is to bewilder; that to enlighten, is to destroy?

* P. 25.

† P. 76.

‡ Mr. Cooper says of the approach of the Revolution he looks for in England, the *dawn of a glorious day* (p. 12.): “my leisure shall be unremittingly employed, and my best endeavours exerted to hasten its approach.” p. 77. Doubtless well prepared for the business by his conversations with Mademoiselle Theroinne, of whom he says, “I have seldom met with views more enlarged, more just, more truly patriotic.”

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But, contrary to all this, with a press regulated for the benefit of society, and not vomiting forth poison for its destruction, the lower classes cannot well be injured by instruction: what a duty then devolves on government to guard against abuses, the neglect of which may be attended with danger, and even ruin to the whole community.

I feel but one great objection that may probably be made to the general conclusions I have drawn from the example of France: it may be said that my reasoning goes too far, because, if just, a nation however enslaved, and however miserable, should submit to all evils, rather than attempt the greater evil of a Revolution. The argument is common, and, dissected by reasoning, would lead on both sides into a discussion that would here be misplaced. But reasoning is endless, and facts are few; one motive, were there no other, for preferring them.

In the former revolutions of the modern world, whether in Sweden, Switzerland, Portugal, Holland, or England, the people soon settled into a form of government nearly resembling that which they had enjoyed before the troubles, they never dreamed of making new experiments *on principle*. Even in the case of America the fact holds true in almost every instance; for there is not now in the world

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world a constitution so near the British as that of the United States; I think, *since the events in France*, that it is inferior, for the plain reason of not providing so well against the danger now most to be apprehended, *popular power*: the despotism of a monarch was every where the object of rational apprehension; it is so no longer: a worse monster has shewn itself in the world, that carries a venom in its fangs more *rabid* than the canine. In all former revolutions, therefore, the people reasoned in argument, and felt in fact, that whatever might be the event of the struggle, it could scarcely place them in a worse situation; and this with exception only to America. Experiment therefore justified the nations who felt themselves oppressed in the attempts they made to effect a revolution.

Reverse the medal, and let us ask how this great question stands at present: the principles of equality and Rights of Man are afloat, and an *experimentum crucis* tells us, that a nation, though under a very bad government, may change for one a thousand times worse. This great and disastrous event will give men, let their rank be what it may—the honest workman equally with the prince—a horror at the idea of revolutions; will teach men rather to bear the ills they have, than fly to others that they know not of; and consequently has
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done more against the cause of that real and safe liberty, which was gradually pervading the world, than any other event in the power of mischief to effect. A reflection that ought to make us loathe a Jacobin, with the same detestation as noxious animals of hideous deformity.

Take the worst of the German military governments, and compare the situation of the people, in any point whatever, and it may be asserted truly that they are in a happier and better situation than the French under the anarchy given them by the Rights of Man : to answer that this anarchy may subside and produce a good government at last, is so completely beside the question, reasoning on facts, that I am astonished to hear it so often recurred to ; the experiment of the new government, in France, was complete—it was finished—decreed and accepted—It is farfical to suppose that Louis XVI. had more power to sap or destroy it than any other King : if it could not go on with him, it could not go on at all, and therefore was rotten at heart. It had made a thousand provisions against a disarmed king, but had made none against an armed mob : this mob broke into the sanctuary and kicked the constitution out of doors. Massacres followed, till no man felt his head more safe on his shoulders than the subjects of Achen or Algiers ; and, as to property, it was

was given to the winds: where are the subjects of a German despot whose situation matches this? And as to the *hope* of seeing something better; the hope of the German is more likely to be realized than that of the Frenchman, who has nothing in perspective but new evils, and new revolutions to cure them. A German, therefore, would be wise to renounce the thoughts of liberty, rather than pursue the idea of it through a revolution similar to that of France. Time and a happy coincidence of events may give them such an opportunity as France, worse than lost. They have her example to instruct them.

The plain conclusion to be drawn is this; nations should proceed as individuals; rely only on experimented cases. When philosophers advised the French to seek some system of freedom better than experiment (*Great Britain*) offered, they advised a trust in theory; and at this moment, when Jacobins and reformists advise us to *improve* our constitution, is it not a question directly in point to ask them, whether the experimented freedom we enjoy at present, ought to be hazarded on projects of theory? An unequal representation, rotten boroughs, long parliaments, extravagant courts, selfish ministers, and corrupt majorities, are so intimately interwoven with our practical freedom, that it would require better political anatomists than our modern reformers, to shew, on
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 blessings is France free?—Here is an equal re-
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 English reformers; but not so in the mouths even
 of Jacobins in the Convention—THEY tell you
 that it is anarchy, bloodshed, and famine. “The
 abolition of formal government brings society
 closer together,” is one of Paine’s mountebank
 maxims; his theories should always be brought to
 the test of French practice; this compressure, this
 contact of society, is there well understood; it is
 the pike of one man in the belly of another. Is
 this so very encouraging as to induce an imitation in
 England? Such things, however, are not sufficient
 to satisfy those who demand a reform; no slight
 reason for supposing they look further—and that
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 is a prospect behind, bright enough to fix atten-
 tion, and allure hope—the prospect of copying in
 England the example of France; the regal, noble,
 ecclesiastical, national properties, the spoil of *equal*
citizens!

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There is, in Monf. Mounier's last admirable performance, an observation which merits great attention; that when once a kingdom possesses a free assembly, with the power of the purse, the real apprehension is not for liberty, but for the existence of the crown. And again, "in England the number of representatives of the people is very unequally divided: simple boroughs, which contain few inhabitants, have, from custom, the right of deputing; while districts, very populous, do not participate in elections. This irregularity appears contrary to many incontestible principles; but it could not be rectified without augmenting the force of the democratical part of the government, without danger of breaking the equilibrium, which has been so well preserved for a century; and if ever they consent to render the representation more equal, it would be indispensable to strengthen the other two branches. Inequality of representation, above all, produces this advantage; that a great part of the people *identify* themselves much less with the deputies of the commons, and the public opinion is less corrupted by the passions that may agitate the lower house*." There is deep sense in this remark: the author, who is one of the best of men, and most honest of politicians, who was a leader in the constituent assembly, and

* Recherches sur les Causes qui ont empêché les François de devenir Libres, 1792, tom. ii. p. 372.

marked, with great acumen, their errors, felt the truth he here delineates, and saw the overthrow of their constitution in the eagerness with which the people, incorporated as it were, with the deputies, till those without talents became as corrupt as those whose only talent was corrupting the hearts of others. What fact, what experiment, do our reformers pretend to, on which to ground the certainty, that if those apparent defects of the constitution were removed, the power of the people, without property, would not, in consequence, gain enough—to enable them to gain more—and to advance, by means of those steps,—till they gain all? The case of the French Revolution is much stronger in the affirmative than any other to be produced in the negative; but to speak of cases is absurd, with the reformers, for they proceed absolutely on theory and Rights of Man; those well adapted foundations for a republic in Bedlam.

There appears to me to be a singular propriety in the associations which are at present spreading through the kingdom, petitioning parliament to pass an act to declare all clubs, associations, societies, and meetings of men, that assemble for the purpose of obtaining changes in the constitution, illegal, and that no meeting can legally correspond, either in their own name, or in the

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names of their secretary, or other officer, with any foreign body or government, unless such meeting is sanctioned by charter. The friends of order and good government are now collected, the time is precious, and ought not to be lost; and while we are threatened with the horrors of anarchy, it behoves us to have as much activity and energy in our defence as the violators of all human rights have exerted in their attack: for men to tell us, in such a moment as this, and situated as we are with the enemy of mankind, on one side, and the torch of revolt lighting in Ireland on another side—that they are not Jacobins, but moderate men, wishing *reform*, is as impudent as it would be for a thief to say, that he is not an assassin, because he only holds a candle while another cuts my throat.

That governments cannot be improved, and that legislation should be the only science to stand still, by no means follow: experiment proscribes only great changes; small and gradual advances, in times of serenity; such advances as put nothing to hazard, must be good. It is easy to lay the finger on grievances in England, which every honest and moderate man would wish removed; but it is not when much is demanded, that little should be given; for the plain reason, that the little will not THEN satisfy.

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I shall not be suspected of thinking tithes a light grievance ; but they are a grievance that would be all remedied by the loss of the crop that pays them ; the enormity of the taxes I pay is known to every man that reads the tracts I publish ; heavy as they are, let them remain rather than be changed for a *contribution fonciere* ; the little left me is my own, which might not be the case under the pure dispensations of Jacobin equality. Evils certainly exist in our system, and they are such as will, I trust, be remedied, gradually, by the legislature, acting from its own impulse ; and not from the influence of clubs and reforming societies.

It was an old observation, that a republic could subsist on the trappings of a monarchy. The French have set the seal of experience here, as in every other case, and have shewn, that citizen Robespierre, and citizen Rolland, can out do *Emperor Joseph* and *King George* in extravagance ; the most enormous expences, that ever any nation was deluged with, are the present in France ; a single month's DEFICIENCY is 176 millions, or 7,700,000*l.* sterling ; this is spending at the rate of 90 millions a year. Paine says, " It is cruel to think of a million a year to a king ; " but it is not a breakfast to an assembly of citizens. There is a great deal in the civil list of England that does not concern *trappings*. The payment, for the support of

those trappings, do not probably amount to sixpence a head upon the population of Great Britain, for which sixpence every man has the support of a chief constable that keeps all the other constables to their duty. Instead of sixpence a head paid for tranquillity; the French *now* pay five shillings a head for keeping a gang of cut throats, and an assembly of mad dogs. A splendid imperial court might be supported out of something worse than trappings of the French republic.

Monarchy, says Paine, is a silly contemptible thing, I compare it to something kept behind a curtain, about which there is a great deal of bustle and fuss, and a wonderful air of seeming solemnity; but when, by any accident, the curtain happens to be open, and the company see what it is, they burst into laughter. He has since, in the character of a legislator, had rueful occasions of witnessing that *representation* can exhibit scenes more burlesque, and to the full as laughable, as any in monarchy; and that the legislators of the Convention, determining priority of speaking by boxing—a kick for a *trope*, a black eye for a *metaphor*, and the descent of orators from the tribune that of being tumbled or hurled upon the benches, to the shouts, clappings, and hissings of the galleries, have upon a thousand occasions presented spectacles admirably adapted for moving

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moving the risible faculties of spectators; not forgetting the nickname of our Thetford staymaker—the *punchinello* of the Convention.

If France should ever again possess the precious moment of improving her government without convulsions, which opportunity she had, and lost; or if any other great country, having an indigent poor, should meet such a moment—experiment speaks to them but one language.—TAKE THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION, not because it is theoretically the best, but because it is practically good; but take special care not to mistake that constitution, and give the poison of personal representation, for in such an error your import of British liberty would become the establishment of French anarchy.

The conclusion may be compressed in a few lines; the danger of the moment is great indeed; and only to be guarded against by the most unremitted diligence and activity:—exert that diligence, and bring that activity into play by a unanimous support of the administration, entrusted at present with the public safety: the question is not whether you are a friend or an enemy of that administration; you are certainly a friend to the lives and properties of mankind. Join in associations for our defence against banditti, cut

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throats,

throats, and Jacobins; join against an enemy more subtle, and therefore more dangerous, the friends of reform; the associators who would plant the tree of equal liberty; the mountebanks who have a French nostrum, and Birmingham daggers, for the diseases of our English constitution. Guard against such miscreant attempts by pointed resolutions; and call, with one voice, on the legislature to suppress, by vigorous and decisive laws, the clubs of sedition; the associations that call themselves our "constitutional" instructors and our "friends;" whose lessons are institutes of anarchy; and whose friendship,—should their tenets prevail,—would cement with our best blood, that National Convention of Britain with which those societies have so lately threatened us*.

Question

* I know not how other men feel at reading the registers of meetings of *Jacobins, reformers, friends of the constitution, friends of the liberty of the press*—but to me they appear half farcical, half disgusting; a strange jumble of speeches, and drinking, and singing; one is doubtful whether the proper retribution would be to consider them as traitors, and send them to the Tower; as madmen, and convey them to bedlam; or as disturbers of the peace, and sweep them all to the round-house. There is no government upon earth, or that ever existed in the world, this alone excepted, that would permit assemblies, the professed purport of which is to pull it in pieces; whose object is to declare their own discontent, and to render the people as unhappy as themselves. To consider the epithets they give one another, and the toasts they drink, a by-stander would suppose the kingdom had been for sometime in a state of utter ruin—and that the liberties of the people were rendered

Question of a War.

EVERY reflecting man must, on conviction, derived from long experience, be an enemy to war, and must be of opinion, that that system of policy ought, at this time, as well as at all other periods, to be embraced which promises us the longest duration of peace, for the fifty next years to come. This ought to be the only rule of a statesman; and

dered the sport of tyrants—He would imagine that the press had been under an *imprimatur*, but removed by the zeal of an individual: that the people owed all their *rights* to another member: that all *representation* in parliament hung on the lips of a third: and that the property of England would be at the mercy of *excises*, were it not for the exertion of a fourth. And, attending to the speeches delivered, he would find, to his surprise, that the people of England did not owe their happiness to their government, but were *cajoled* into prosperity: that they were *victims*, viewing with envy the *glorious conquests* of Irish reformers. Such a bystander, not well informed of facts, would certainly conclude that Englishmen were more miserable than any nation on the globe, and particularly than Frenchmen. Speculative arrangements of state offices are sometimes amusing—let us suppose one of these orators a secretary, another a secretary's secretary, another a treasurer of the navy, a fourth paymaster, a fifth secretary at war, and a sixth attorney general: what, in such a case, would at once become of all this ruin? Where, alas! would be found the rights of the press, the rights of the people, the rights of representation, the rights of no excise? A magic wand is waved over the island, and evils fly off like the evaporation of an ethereal mist—the atmosphere clears—the sun shines. This is not supposition, or theory; it is **FACT**, deduced from a thousand **EXPERIMENTS**—It is *history*, *experience*, and *man*.

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if, by avoiding hostilities with these new destroyers of mankind at present, we had any chance of preserving peace, my weak voice should urge our ministers to guard it with the most sedulous precautions; but if, on the contrary, preserving peace at present be only whetting the swords, storing the magazines, and disseminating the principles, which are by and by to be employed against us, with tenfold effect; and, above all other points, planting and nourishing those principles among us by every insidious art; if such should be the consequences of peace at present, it must be sufficiently apparent to every reasonable man, that on the long account, every year of war, at this crisis, will probably secure ten years of peace in its train, and consequently that the policy of permanent peace is, of all others, that which most clearly calls for temporary war.

Such a coincidence of circumstances, as produces this singular situation, has very rarely happened. In almost all the former wars, in which this kingdom has been engaged since the revolution, our government or the opposition to government, have looked only at their own interests, and but seldom at those of the nation. The war of 1744, was a war absolutely without an object, and brought on by the opposition in parliament, raising

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ing a clamour against Sir Robert Walpole. The war of 1756, was a commercial war for the preservation of colonies. The American war was to retain those colonies in obedience; a war, partly of commerce, partly of government, and partly popular. But on true political principles, all those three wars, to which we owe nearly the whole of our national debt, were ill-judged, and ought to have been avoided: the attainment of the object in view was not worth an hundredth part of the expence, much less the *chance* of attaining that object. If the object before us now were of no greater magnitude, God forbid that any honest man should have pleaded for hostilities. Had the French contented themselves with the domestic arrangements of their own government, what would have been our concern in their transactions? None! Nothing in either policy or pretence. Whether their edifice were philosophical, atheistical, or metaphysical;—whether their parliament assembled in one or two houses; whether they pursued the rights or wrongs of man; all were the same to us: and accordingly our government, greatly to its honour, was a mere spectator, not an indifferent spectator; but rather friendly than otherwise. But when the new Revolution of the 10th of August, brought other principles into play;—when the republicans, who then mounted aloft in the storm of their own raising, proclaimed principles

principles directly and hostilely offensive * to the government of every country around them—and in effect declared war against them, in the famous decree of support to all rebels who wished for French freedom;—when these hostile declarations were found to spring from the victories that attended their arms;—when they were accompanied with the most busy, impudent, and intrusive interference in the parties and discontents of these kingdoms, and that in a tone and manner equally insidious and dangerous: when all these circumstances combined to fill our government with the utmost alarm, what epithet of condemnation would have been adequate to their demerit had they acted on any other plan than the one they pursued? It is not war or no war? But war in 1793 or in 1796? War with an enemy powerfully attacked by others? or with the same enemy after she have conquered others? Shall it be war in St. Domingo and Martinique, or in Ireland and Suffex?

Those who have attempted to persuade us, that we are in danger this war from the strength and vigour of *republican* France, have their motives for such an opinion; but, according to all the appearances on which human foresight can build, the

* "Liberty shall be extinguished in Europe, or our principles shall every where triumph." *Address of the Convention to the United States.*

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idea has little of justice for its support. The dangers that threaten at present, are those that threaten France; they have orators, it is true, who persuade them, that they are invincible, but when you examine the circumstances of the force relied on, they must make any reasonable man smile.—*Does the pay of our troops require money? Our harvests and our vintages, our raw materials and manufactures, will they be less abundant because a crown of six livres is worth more or less than a crown in assignats. Frenchmen will be fed, clothed, lodged, warmed, armed, and encamped so long as they have a fertile soil; and our territory is very much increased since the beginning of the war.*— Cloots, February 5.

Such are the marvellous politicks of the orator of the *sans culottes*, for nothing rich enough to wear breeches merits the epithet *human*, in the classification of this system of natural rights. This speech, received with applause, shews sufficiently what are the hopes and resources of the Convention. They have extremely rich land in Auvergne, and therefore they will fight very well in Flanders! The banks of the Garonne yield great crops of hemp, consequently their fleets will be effective friends to Tippo Saib. Money is necessary to Kings, but republicans know how to do without it! The very first lines, the first rudiments of political science are

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(138)

are all knocked on the head in such ideas: this orator, the powers of whose mind goes no further than giving fluency to nonsense, speaks in common with many other members of their pandemonium, of all France *rising* and marching to the frontiers. I do not conceive it possible that any person, in this enlightened country, can be so ignorant as to be deceived by such stuff, one or two observations, however, will not be thrown away, not for confuting a French orator, but that the principles of national force may be better understood.

Guiding myself by their own authorities, I may state their extra resources, from the regal and ecclesiastical plunder, at four *milliards*, that is 175,000,000l. sterling: their last accounts state the value of the possessions of 70,000 emigrants at 4,800,000,000 liv.: here, therefore, are at least eight *milliards*, or 350,000,000l. sterling in Cloots' solid real wealth; the wealth of rich land and fertile crops. they have had besides, if you will believe them, an annual revenue of 600,000,000 liv. above 25,000,000l. sterling. Now what has been the result of all this? They have coined paper to the amount of 3000,000,000 liv. (131,000,000l. sterling); and, after all, they have, within these few days, coined 800,000,000 liv. more of paper about 36,000,000l. sterling!!! Thus proving direct negative to all this egregious politician doctrine.

doctrine.—No government that ever existed in the world, came into the possession, or rather into the plunder, of such solid wealth; and yet it is of so little consequence, that they are now driven, after a single, and that a triumphant campaign, to the extremities of adding 800 to 3000,000,000 of paper! paper! paper!!! With the rich land and abundant harvests of three-fourths of France in their power, they are so poor, so ragged, and so hungry, that half the registers of their assembly is occupied with cries for raiment, demands for food, complaints of famine; a nation without bread, and armies without breeches.

Such are the facts,—they (a noble Lord in England is of the same opinion) were too ignorant to know, that such would inevitably be the result;—and this orator of the human race continues ignorant, in spite of all their experience. He might, however, have known, that rich land and the wealth which, in home consumption, may be called solid and real, cannot be brought into effect in a war at a distance, but by means of a circulating specie of such credit, as to command commodities. Assignats, before a livre of this 800,000,000 is circulated, have created a famine, and raised the price of wheat to 50 liv. the sack, or 100 liv. the quarter (4l. 7s. 6d.); the new issue will increase this scarcity, and throw a proportionable impediment

impediment in the way of every operation of government. Great discontents, and even insurrections, have been heard in various parts of the kingdom; what will be the consequence of adding in successive campaigns, to this enormous amount of circulating mischief,—of injecting into all the veins and arteries of the political body, not blood but poison? The value of rich land, of harvests, and vintages, will soon be found, when the silver wings which ought to convey them, with vital efficacy, to the frontiers, becomes paper, at 100 per cent. discount. It is taxes paid in specie, or in something as good as specie, that enables the public to avail itself of private wealth. If eight *milliards* of *real* wealth leave them beggars, for want of MONEY, the experiment is surely complete and finished, for all except *convention* politicians!

The object of the war being a durable peace, attained by the destruction of a combination of reformers, who, not content with operating on the basis of their own country, proclaim *improvement* and hostility against all their neighbours—such being the great object, the principle of self-defence, which instigates the war—it is but of secondary moment what the immediate event of the military operations may prove. Our prospect however has nothing to alarm: the state of the French West Indies is such, that a British fleet has only to appear

pear and meet the greeting of friends. The Rights of Man and equality have proved too ruinous to be listened to after the flag of real freedom appears in those seas; this is the expectation in the Convention itself; and their recompence is the idea of giving freedom to Peru!

If there is truth in the representation I have given of our danger—if the field of that danger is at home—and if in this war with France we have to fight, not thro' ambition or for conquest, but for the preservation of our lives and properties against foreign and domestic foes, combined for our destruction; it then surely behoves every man that wishes well to his country, to give firmness and vigour to that government by which alone we can hope for defence and security; by as great unanimity as our enemies will admit,—by rejecting, reprobating, and holding up to abhorrence, every idea of altering, reforming, or tampering, at so dangerous a crisis, with the constitution to which we owe the prosperity that is so hateful an object to the Jacobins of France;—by exerting ourselves, every man in his individual and collective capacity, with all vigour, to promote the views of government in an energetic conduct of the war, by which alone we can hope for a continuance of those blessings which belong to us as Britons. The public conduct which this kingdom at present

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holds, is paternal to the dearest interests of the people, and ought to render it popular and respected. Success under God depends on the people bearing the burthens, which the necessity of war may impose on them, with patience and cheerfulness; convinced as they must be, that the war is not only just, but absolutely and essentially necessary to the salvation of all that makes life desirable; the peace of families,—the surety of dwellings,—the safety of life,—the security of property:—they will consider its expence as the sacrifice of a little, for the preservation of the whole,

I am old enough to remember distinctly the whole course of the war of 1756, to have reflected on the events of that and of the American war; and though I felt as an Englishman ought to feel for the honour of his country's arms, yet the events made no deep impression on my mind,—nothing personal created the least anxiety in my bosom. In the present contest there is none of this want of interest—the rapid conquests of the French in the last campaign filled me with apprehension and gloom; I saw with horror the elevated crests of our own Jacobins,—I marked the meditated mischief, and felt, that all for which I wished to live had received a shock. The late events, which gave hope of a turning tide, revived my spirits,—my house

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house became more my castle,—I viewed my farm as more my own,—I began to feel the soil firmer under my feet,—and that the sun of British freedom might yet shine with beams unblotted by deeds of horror. What were victories in Hesse, or defeats in America, to the personal feelings of a farmer in Suffolk? alike to him or conquest or defeat.—Not so in this contest, eventful to every human feeling,—that comes *home to men's business and bosoms*; in which defeat will rob him of his patrimony, his friends, his life, his children; convert his country to his gaol, and raise the hand he may have supported to acts of plunder and of death. He who does not feel his property more secure, and the lives of his family more safe, in consequence of every success gained against that band of cut throat wretches, that usurp the government of France,—has a bosom touched by vibrations in no unison with mine. It is a war of humanity against the ravagers and destroyers of the earth; and it might have given one the horrible prospect of seeing men, the members even of this prosperous and happy society, tempted by vile ambition, or instigated by the poverty of profligacy,—marking power as the offspring of confusion and plunder, the reward of anarchy;—of seeing such men repining at victories that fill every honest bosom with joy, and glorying in defeats disastrous to the cause of humanity. The victories of this

war tend to preserve liberty on the firm basis of the British constitution; property on law; and life in the pure dispensations of unsuspected justice. But to what tends defeat? Let the French system establish itself, and there sets the sun of England's liberty,—there flies, as before a pestilence, all that renders life sweet, or property desirable:—plunder, rapine, blood, succeed.

APPENDIX.

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A P P E N D I X.

WHATEVER representation took place in *antient* times, was of property, never of persons. "The supreme power in the mycelgemotes, or folkmote (p. 171.), was ever lodged in the collective body of the free PROPRIETORS OF LAND," says Dr. Squire, afterwards Bishop of St. Davids, in his *Inquiry into the English Constitution*. "The wittenagemote, composed of the King's companions, or Thanes, the governors of counties, bishops, and dignified clergymen of large property." *Ib.* "Without five hides of land, a ceorl could not be put upon the rank of a King's Thane." *Ib.* A hide of land from 500 to 600 acres, *Hunce*, vol. i. p. 203.

THE last, and perhaps the best, of our historians (Henry), unites with all other unprejudiced men,—“As soon as any of the ceorls acquired *five hides of land, with a church, a bell-house, and manor place*, they were declared thanes or nobles, and members of the wittenagemote. This qualification was gradually raised, till, in the

APPENDIX.

reign of Edward the Confessor, it was fixed at forty hides." (Vol. iii. p. 371. *Wilkins' Leges Saxon*, p. 70, 71. *Historia Eliensis*, cap. 40.) Though great efforts have been made to prove, that the ceorls, or small proprietors of land, were represented in the wittenagemote, by their tithingmen, or borsholders; and the inhabitants of trading towns, by their aldermen, or portreeves, it must be confessed, that of this there is not sufficient historic evidence remaining (*Tyrel Introd.* p. 95. *Squire*, 244). It is however highly probable, that many ceorls and burghesses, who dwelt in or near the place where a wittenagemote was held, attended it as interested spectators, and intimated their satisfaction, with its resolves, by shouts of applause. On some great occasions, when there was an uncommon concourse of such spectators, their presence and approbation is recorded in such terms as these "*omnique populo audiente et vidente* (and all the people hearing and looking on) *aliorumque fidelium infinita multitudo qui omnes laudaverunt* (and a prodigious crowd of other people who all applauded) they frequently assembling in the open air, in some extensive plain." (*Spelman Concil*, p. 625. 350. *Henry*).

DR. BRADY hath taken the pains to collect all the accounts given in old chronicles of the great councils or parliaments of this nation, in the

the Saxon times, and hath shewn very clearly, that the common people or inhabitants of burghs, never had deputies in any of them, nor were they in a proper condition of freedom to be capable of choosing representatives to sit in such an assembly, Sir Henry Spelman, after carefully examining into the constitution of an hundred parliaments, held from the Norman conquest to the 49th of Henry III. pronounces that the boroughs never were represented in any: Sir W. Dugdale, and all other judicious and unprejudiced writers, versed in the diction of the times, and in the antiquities of their country, agree with him in this opinion. *Carte*, vol. ii. p. 257.

IF in the long period of two hundred years, which elapsed between the conquest and the latter end of Henry III. and which abounded in factions, revolutions, and convulsions of all kinds, the house of commons never performed one single legislative act so considerable as to be once mentioned by any of the numerous historians of that age, they must have been totally insignificant: and in that case, what reason can be assigned for their ever being assembled? Can it be supposed that men of so little weight or importance possessed a negative voice against the King and the barons? Every page of the subsequent histories, discovers their existence; though these histories

are not writ with greater accuracy than the preceding ones, and indeed scarcely equal them in that particular. The Magna Charta of King John provides that no scutage or aid shall be imposed, either on the land or towns, but by the consent of the great council; and for more security, it enumerates the persons entituled to a seat in that council, the prelates, and immediate tenants of the crown, without any mention of the commons: an authority so full, certain, and explicit, that nothing but the zeal of party could ever have procured credit to any contrary hypothesis. *Hume*, vol. ii. p. 119. In opposition to such authorities, Lord Littleton is party-headed enough to rely on a petition from St. Alban's, which implies a preceding right; yet himself confesses, that it contains two gross falsehoods. A pretty house of commons, whose existence is to be proved by the implication of a few words in a lying petition; and this in the teeth of Magna Charta!!

IN antient times, and at the first institution of representatives for counties, none had any vote in the election of knights, but such as owed suit to the county court, *i. e.* such as held immediately of the crown; for all that held lands of mesne lords, owed suit and service to their lord's courts. What contributed to the alteration of the constitution in this respect, was a shameful indolence

lence in country gentlemen, who procured privileges, allowing them to appear by proxy; and it was one of Simon de Montfort's ways of engaging the favour of the gentry, by making such privileges general. The proxies deputed by the gentlemen were generally some of their own freeholders, who, by this means, attending at county courts (though not in their own right), came, in process of time, to be put on juries, &c. It doth not appear, however, that these freeholders, under mesne lords, ever had a share in the election of knights of shires, till the tumultuary parliament, in the 1st of Henry IV.; and thence arose the grievous complaints, made by the commons in parliament, of *outrageous and excessive numbers of people pretending a right to attend elections*. * Henry IV. thinking these inferior freeholders convenient for his purpose, established their right of voting by an act in his 7th year. This act, the first of its kind that was ever made, the rights of electors having ever subsisted on prescription, passed in the same session, wherein, by a like novelty, he took upon him to alter the course of succession and descent of the crown, as if a new modelling of parliaments was necessary to support his usurpation. *Carte*, vol. ii. p. 699. What then becomes of a modern reformer's *conception*, that

* Stat. 8 Hen. VI. c. 7. 7 Hen. IV. c. 15. 6 Hen. VI. c. 4.
10 Hen. VI. c. 2.

the statute of the 8th of Henry VI. *cut off the rights of nineteen in twenty of the people*; instead of a cutting off, it was an extension in matter of right.

THE origin of knights of the shire is thus shewn by Carte (see also vol. ii. p. 250.), to have been aristocratical,—a mere method by representation of easing the lesser barons in their appearance in the great council,—those who had a right to choose had a right to sit in person, but craved the exemption; it was a series of *abuses, contrary to the original purity of the constitution* that gave this right of election, first to men not holding by noble tenure, and then to 40s. voters. I have read, with attention, Lord Littleton's most unsatisfactory endeavours to prove the contrary (Life of King Henry II. vol. 3.), which Mr. Hume puts down with his usual ease and perspicuity, Hist. vol. ii. p. 509. The more remotely this business is examined, the more decisively every thing in our government traces back to the crown, and to an aristocracy created by the crown. Where is your original PURITY? In the woods of Germany?

IN all disputes on the origin of a branch of the legislature in any country, where there is a question of its existence, its being a question at all is *prima facie*, a strong argument against such existence,

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istence, and therefore the *onus probandi*, ought to
be on those who presume it. It would be an utter
absurdity to make any question of the existence of
an aristocratical wittenagemote, before the Con-
quest, or of a House of Barons after it; their ex-
istence is palpable in every page of the historians;
and after the House of Commons was really insti-
tuted, the existence of that also was manifest in
legislative acts. But to pretend to a legislature
incog. is a farce; if it effectively exists, it must
shew itself in a thousand different ways, and not
want to be dragged from the lurking hole of dark
expressions in old musty charters, some *translated*,
the original lost, and others proved to be forgeries.
The attempt thus to prove the existence of a legis-
lature is alone, without looking further, a strong
suspicion, that it had no existence. It is worthy
only of Lord Littleton, who translates the expres-
sion, *omnes de regno*, in an age of feudal barbarity,
by *the whole commonalty of the realm*, he might as
well have included the swine as the men who drove
them, for they were in that age of as much ac-
count: it is like his making the expressions *prin-*
cipes, satrapæ, optimates, magnates, proceres, mean
the people: by thus torturing words from that
meaning which holds of the character and man-
ners of an age, such writers deduce——what?
Not some trifling point, which might easily, from
its nature, have been clear or confused——but
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the existence of a House of Commons!!! And our reformers are very glad to join them in order to shew *the original purity of the constitution*, flourishing amidst the rapine, blood, and death that followed the footsteps of tartar barons; amidst the barbarity of feudal monarchs, and enslaved villains; scenes of misery, to which the people of England are now bid, by the vile tongue of Jacobin faction, to look back to with eyes of envy and regret!

IN a pamphlet, called the *People's Barrier*, it is said that the Commons were represented in the parliaments of the Saxons, and this is taken from the works of the Rev. Samuel Johnson: his *Essay concerning Parliaments at a certainty* now lies before me, and there you find much of Saxon parliaments, but without one word of proof that they were so composed: those parliaments were merely aristocratical, and the expressions, in the *mirror of justice*, much of which was written in Edward the Second's time (and therefore no Saxon authority), convey no determinate idea: *Le Roy assembler les comittes*; again, *le commun assent de Roy & de ses countes*—now for the explanation—*comittes* and *countes*, mean counties, counties mean free-men, free-men mean the mob—*ergo*, all the world were represented under the Saxons; very well deduced Mr. Samuel Johnson: this is all he offers for
Saxon

Saxon times—the next word he jumps to Edward the First: but he would afterwards make out, that a Saxon *folk-mote* was a parliament, yet he expressly says, *I do not readily know what that folk-mote is* (p. 287). He admits, however, that Sir Henry Spelman's is the learnedest glossary that ever was writ; and that learned antiquary is directly against him, and proves that a folk-mote was not a wittenagemote; and how the coronation oath of Richard the Second is *direct proof* will puzzle a plain man to discover. Let the reader consult Mr. Hume's first appendix, and various passages in Dr. Henry, and the authorities cited, he will there see the utter folly and absurdity of looking for the Commons in the wittenagemote, or for *the people*, not freeholders, in the county and hundred courts.

Annual parliaments have been as much mistaken: Blackstone (a favourite authority with many reformers), says, "not that the King is, or ever was obliged, by these ancient statutes, to call a *new* parliament every year, but only to permit a parliament to sit annually." The above quoted Johnson, has a chapter to shew, that they were held *fresh and fresh*: but all he says amounts to no more than an inquiry into who should bear their expences if they sat longer than forty days? For he says expressly that *the true reason of abrupt dissolution was, that their sitting, after the given time, must*

must be at the King's charge, which in one word explains the reason of so many new parliaments, and completely overturns the whole argument of the chapter.

When the House of Commons, in Charles the First's reign, gave, in the *Petition of Right*, what might be called a history of their own importance in the legislature, and began with a statute of Edward the First, to shew that the consent of knights and burgessees was necessary to the levy of a tax—is it possible to conceive that they would not have gone farther back, had they been able to do it upon unquestioned authority?

But to drop all reference, and to reason on the comparative state of society in the time of the Anglo-Saxons and the present age—an observation very obvious is, that the power of the aristocracy, which admitted such men as Harold, Godwin, Leofric, Siward, Morcar, Edwin, Edric, and Alfric, must have been so great, that whatever institutions could throw a weight into the scale of the people, were a right and necessary counterpoise:—after the Conquest the Crown was omnipotent, the same maxim held; but after the people became predominant, brought their king to the scaffold, and trampled on the peerage—after liberty became firmly fixed, and the Crown was left absolutely at the

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the mercy of the Commons for every shilling of its revenue—is it for such an age to look back to periods so totally different; and to call for rendering such a popular government still more popular, because those laws (supposing their existence) were good 800 years ago!! Every principle, not of politics only, but of common sense, must be given to the winds before such reasoning can be admitted. This spirit of faction says, give us our antient laws, our antient rights—have not the Crown and the nobility an equal right to reply?—*granted—take them—but restore to us what we at the same time possessed.* Like true tyrants (and no spirit of tyranny matches the republican) they buy their possessions, and then, keeping the purchase, demand back the price. Do you urge, in reply, the *majesty* of the people?—The majesty of the *sans culottes*? Go to France.

If any one doubts what our reformers really look for, let him reflect on a passage in the *People's Barrier*; the author is contending for universal suffrage in the election of representatives—"By the word representatives, I by no means intend to deny or derogate from the right of *the Commons at large*, for that the original power and authority reside in them is implied in the very word itself." Here representation is cut up by the roots, in the very language of the tribunes in the National Convention;

vention;—the constitution contended for is professed to be mob and anarchy !!

“ Had a House of Commons, *freely chosen by all the people* existed, could Charles have been a tyrant, Cromwell a protector, or King William suspend the *habeas corpus*, &c. &c.?” *People’s Barrier*. Answer: Such a House of Commons exists in France, and has caused enormities fit only for republicans. The experiment is tried; and 25 millions of people ruined, the result.

I hold it, says Blackstone, sufficient that it is generally agreed, that in the main the constitution of Parliament, as it now stands, was marked out so long ago as the 17th of King John, A. D. 1215, in the great charter, wherein he promises to summon all archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, and greater barons personally; and all other tenants in chief under the Crown by the sheriff. This is whimsical;—to refer to Magna Charta to prove the constitution then to be in the main as it now stands, while it affords the most positive proof of the direct contrary fact, and even in the very words here quoted. The tenants in chief under the Crown were a part of the aristocracy; here is an express exclusion of every elementary atom that could form a House of Commons, in the words from which the false deduction is made, that in the main the constitution was the same

same as at present:—if so, Venice and the Grisons are under similar governments.

There is another passage in that celebrated lawyer, which, in my humble opinion, deserves a re-consideration.—“ The two houses naturally drawing in two directions of opposite interest, and the prerogative in another still different from them both, they mutually keep each other from exceeding their proper limits—like three distinct powers, in mechanics, they jointly impel the machine of government, in a direction different from what either, acting by themselves, would have done; but at the same time in a direction partaking of each and formed out of all; a direction which constitutes the true line of the liberty and happiness of the community.” I do not conceive that this is either the theory or the practice of our constitution.—Three distinct powers in mechanics, acting equally in contrary directions, would arrest all motion and the machine would stand still, which is not the case. The theory seems to be one preponderating power, absolutely overcoming the two opposite ones, and having them both at its mercy: these in constant danger unite for self defence: this is the House of Commons on paper, in theory: but in practice the Crown by *influence*, in union with the *influence* of the Lords, and with that of honest men, in the assembly itself, gently

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persuades

persuades and beseeches, as well as it can, the Commons to use this enormous power with moderation. It has sometimes happened that this could not be done; at such moments the leaders of that House have contented themselves with seizing the administration of the executive power, without attacking the power itself; but suppose such an alteration was made in elections, in representation, in the duration of parliaments, as gave *the people* such a power over those leaders as to force an attack on the executive itself, instead of its administration—what would be the consequence? It is sufficiently clear to the most careless observer, that the constitution would be levelled in the dust—the House of Commons acting by the impulse of the lowest of the people would be irresistible—the Crown and the Lords would sink together. With a good and a popular King, such things are unlikely, but what is a constitution good for that depends on the perpetual existence of what is not to be looked for in the continued duration of many centuries? Suppose a weak and unpopular King. Do not these considerations give us some reason for questioning the justice of the learned judges' description? Do they not rather lead us to believe that the theory of our constitution is really bad; that the practice is the best part of it, and that to which we are really indebted for whatever we enjoy? There are men who tell us, that
a virtuous

a virtuous House of Commons, though at the command of the people, would act virtuously ;— this resolves itself into a dependance on the virtue of a mob—the men who wish to place us in this dependance must either be fools who see not the danger, or rogues that know it well, and therefore are earnest to involve us: but at all events these ideas, of I know not what mechanical contradictions, and counter constitutional powers, are apparently erroneous, and therefore ought to be well considered before they are acquiesced in.

DR. TUCKER gives a reason of very great weight against any representation on grounds of equality of any kind. In such a representation, London would have 100 members, at least, and always on the spot: what a novice in politics must he be, that does not see the infinite evils that would result—and this under a general system, that gave more importance to mobs than they have at present! What infatuation! One hundred London members backed by a London mob: a very amusing idea! *Treatise on Civil Government*, p. 258.

THE able and eloquent Count de Lally Tondal, in his second letter to Mr. Burke, contends, that it was *necessary* to give the double representation to the *tiers*. Let any person read his

state of the kingdom, p. 15, and then ask, if more powerful—more decisive reasons could possibly be brought *against* that measure? For if the mob were dragging parliaments in the kennel, for demanding antient forms, what had a politician reason to expect from making that mob omnipotent!! Charles V. Gustavus, and the Barons of England (p. 17.), knew how to keep the popular party within bounds—but did Louis XVI.? Was his personal character, which had relaxed every rein of government, to be overlooked in such a question? With the government in such hands, what security against the three houses coming together; seeing there had been precedents even for that?

THE point of religion, *politically* considered, is a great and arduous question, which demands talents, fully to examine and arrange, greater perhaps than any other branch of legislation. The ablest men of the age, seem rather to split on this rock than to escape it. When I read in a tract, a complaint of the author, that, *because he objects to particular religious tenets, he has been represented as an enemy of order and of government*; and in the same tract meet with the assertion, that *the revolution of the 10th of August was a happy and necessary completion of that of the 14th of July*, I see an instance which affords a proof of this. The latter

latter sentiment makes one's blood run cold, for it implies more than it professes. Freezing with its effect, I turned hastily to the end of the work, to see if it was not explained (as the publication took place after the death of the King) in a chapter of additions and corrections; but no such matter. The question comes surely with force; is such a man represented as an enemy of government, on account of his *religious tenets*, or on account of his *political opinions*?

When such sentiments are abroad, and even gloried in, and found most wonderfully connected, one knows not how, with religious tenets, infinitely difficult becomes the business, I will not say of toleration, but of the whole system of legislation, so far as it connects with religion. Would you have a unitarian take a seat on the bench of bishops? Religious reasons have not yet been given why they should not. But would you have a man there who publicly declares, that the revolution of the 10th of August was a *HAPPY* one? No; most assuredly. Hence then, in the *repeal* of tests and subscriptions, are they to be considered as levelled against heterodox doctrines of religion; or, as political securities, that the power and emoluments of the church shall be lodged with men whose opinions do not tend to the utter destruction of our admirable constitution IN STATE? And

further, if there are any particular sects of religion, whose professors are generally tinctured with republicanism and Jacobinism, will any man of common sense suppose the non-repeal of tests and restrictions persisted in merely on religious motives?

I shall, from this fearful epoch of the French revolution, have many doubts in political maxims, which have been very generally subscribed to for these last twenty years, and, among others, on the question of toleration, *for those countries in which it has not been either the law or policy of the state.* The tolerating spirit of the old government of France was one of the chief engines of its destruction; and should the noblest system of government the world ever saw—that of Britain—receive a mortal wound—that wound will have its origin in the same cause. Were I a Spanish minister, I might advise my master to regulate the inquisition; but I would not advise him to abolish it—*thanks to Jacobinism!*

THE END.

To ARTHUR YOUNG, Esq. Bradfield Hall, near Bury.

Crown and Anchor, March 18, 1793.

S I R,

I AM desired by the Committee to communicate to you the inclosed Resolutions, which they came to last night. It is their wish, not only to pay the tribute they think due to so excellent a performance, but to call the attention of the public to a work which cannot fail of making a great impression on all who read it.

I join most heartily in the sentiments of the Committee; and I hope the step they have taken will be approved by you,

I have the honour to be,

S I R,

Your most obedient, and very humble servant,

JOHN REEVES, Chairman,

CROWN AND ANCHOR March 15, 1793.

At a Meeting of the General Committee this Day,

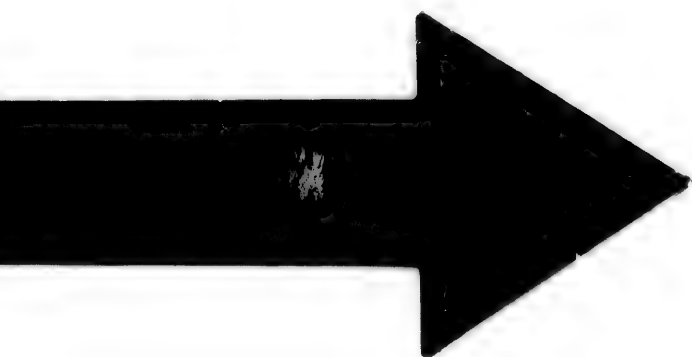
RESOLVED,

THAT the thanks of this Committee be given to ARTHUR YOUNG, Esq. for his excellent Pamphlet, intituled, "*The Example of France a Warning to Britain*:" in which he has successfully opposed the testimony of facts and experience to the hazardous speculations of visionary theorists in matters of government.

RESOLVED,

That the said resolution be inserted in the Newspapers.





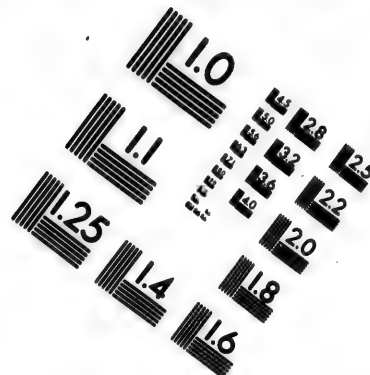
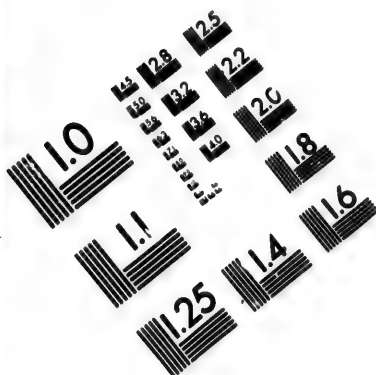
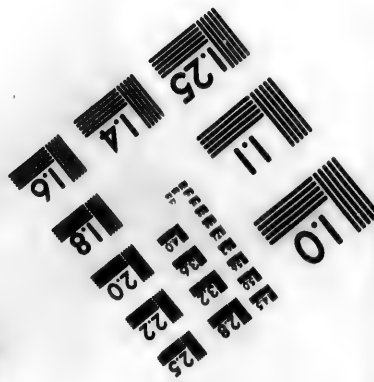
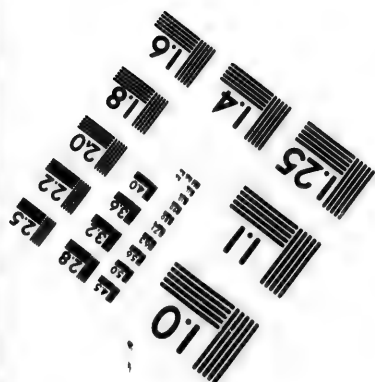
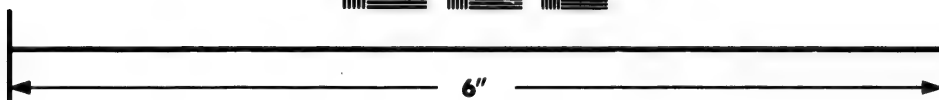
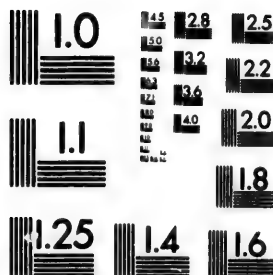


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TO ARTHUR YOUNG, Esq.

Melford, April 7, 1793.

S I R,

I AM desired by the Committee of the Association of loyal Inhabitants of the Hundred of Babergh, to transmit to you the following Resolution:

"That the best and most cordial thanks of the Committee be given to ARTHUR YOUNG, Esq. for his excellent Pamphlet, so particularly useful at this crisis, intituled, *"The Example of France a Warning to Britain;"* and that the Secretary be requested to communicate them, by a letter addressed to him at Bradfield-Hall."

I feel the greatest satisfaction in sending you the above resolution, because it affords me an opportunity of informing you, that it passed not merely with unanimity, but with the strongest expressions of approbation and applause. Permit me to add my acknowledgments for the pleasure and instruction I have received from a publication, which, while it gives you a just claim to the esteem, respect, and gratitude of every friend to the constitution, will, as its next best reward, subject you to the censure and calumny of all the enemies to order and good government,

I am, very respectfully,

Sir, your most humble servant,

CHARLES EDWARD STEWART.

To ARTHUR YOUNG, Esq.

Hoxne Hall, Suffolk, April 16, 1793.

S I R,

AS Chairman of the Loyal Association of the hundreds of Hoxne and Hartismere, I have the honour to transmit to you the warmest thanks of the Committee, which met last Thursday, at Eye, for your incomparable pamphlet, intituled, "*The Example of France a Warning to Britain.*" And I beg leave to add my own in particular, for the singular satisfaction I have experienced from the perusal of that publication.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

THO. MAYNARD.

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E R R A T A.

THE only apology I can make for the incorrectness of the first edition of these papers, was the desire I had to print them at the time when they were most applicable to public events. For the errors that are found in the present edition, I have to plead an illness, which confined me to my bed during a great part of the time the printing lasted, and which permitted me to revise very imperfectly some parts that most wanted correction; the following passages, among, I am afraid, many others, wanted the attention I could not give.

- P. 3. l. 19. *for inadequate, read adequate.*
 8. l. *the last. national representation," dele the inverted commas.*
 17. l. 6. *for government, read system.*
Ib. l. 21. *for producible to, read formed on.*
Ib. l. *the last. for illuminated. Insurrection, read illuminated : insurrection.*
 27. l. 15. *for was, read were.*
 28. l. 13. *for tranquilly, read tranquil.*
 36. l. 4. *for montennier, read moutonnier.*
 46. l. 5. *dele † the note, and insert it at p. 156.*
 47. l. 16. *dele these.*
 48. l. 15. *for most preposterous, read the most, &c.*
 49. l. 18. *for I am, read I was—and for with, read wished.*
Ib. l. 20. *for I wish the middle classes of landed property better represented; I wish a new member for every county, elected by men who possess, &c. read I wished the middle classes of landed property had been better represented, and that a new member for every county might be elected, &c.*
 83. l. 13. *for Neckar, read Necker.*
 104. l. 1. *for Draper's, read Drapier's.*
 128. l. 7. *for who condemn, read who condemn the war.*
 132. l. 14. *for exhilarate, read exhilarate.*
 134. l. 21. *for cuts the throat of, read defeats.*
 135. l. 1. *for was, read were.*
Ib. l. 4. *for lawyers were conning, read lawyers conned.*
Ib. l. 9. *for prove, read proves.*
Ib. l. 25. *for was, read is.*
 136. l. 4. *for only by means of association, read by means of association only.*
 137. *bottom note. for room, read meeting.*
 147. l. 21. *for there appears to me to be, read it appears to me that there would be.*

ERRATA.

- P. 150. l. 23. *before a kick, add a mark of parenthesis.*
 16. l. 26. *before to the shouts, add the second mark of parenthesis.*
 154. l. 24. *for have looked only at their own interests, read has looked at its own interests only.*
 156. l. 23. *for what epithet of condemnation would have been adequate to their demerit, had they acted on any other plan than the one they pursued, read what condemnation would have been adequate to its demerit, had it acted on any other plan than what it has pursued.*
 158. l. 1. *for knocked on the head, read erased.*
 16. l. 2. *for goes, read go.*
 160. l. 3. *for heard, read frequent.*
 168. l. 1. *for is paternal to, read promotes.*
 163. l. 14. *for Hunce, read Hume.*
 166. l. 10. *for Tyrel, read Tyrrel.*
 168. l. 14. *for party-headed enough to, read so zealous as to.*
 171. l. 14. *for original, read originals.*
 173. l. 17. *for annual parliaments have been as much mistaken, read the question whether parliaments were annual, has been as much mistaken.*

And above all, gentle reader, when you have had your laugh, correct that notable *bull*, p. 52. *and bad Mirabeau been now alive, his head would have been on a pike*, by inserting the monosyllable *soon*;—*would be soon on a pike*. And lastly, let me add one word on the acceptation in which I use, in various passages, the term *mob*, by which I would never be understood to imply the mass of the lower classes—the people; but simply the busy, intriguing, discontented leaders; the fellows who associate and combine to spread discontent; and are, in all moments of heat, forward in the cause of mischief. The quiet people, who mind their own business at their homes, however low, and however poor, have nothing of *mob* in them; but when actuated by the ill-designing, to assemble for any public purpose not strictly legal, then they merit that appellation; thus it appears that all societies, whose object is to reform the constitution, are to all intents and purposes palpably *mob*, let the rank of certain of the members be what it may.

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